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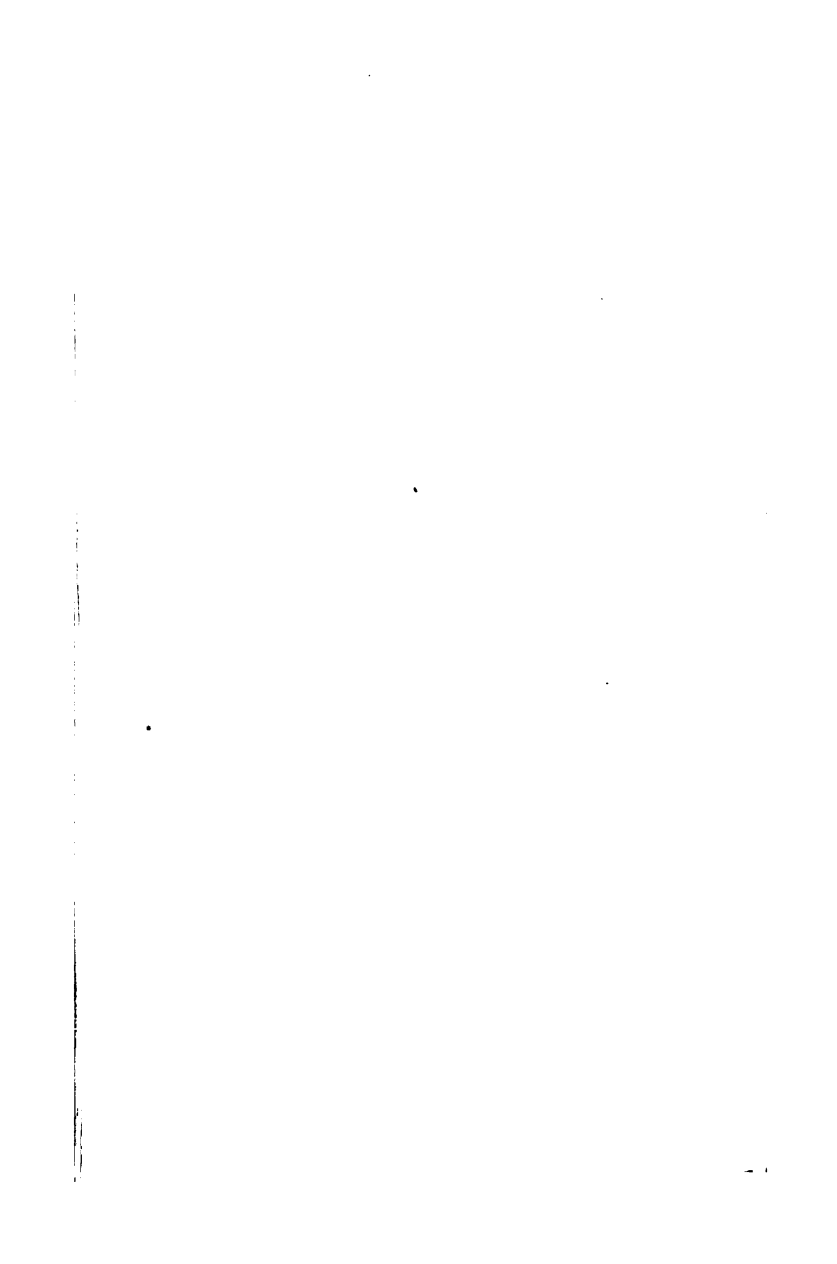
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THE
NEWSPAPER WORLD:

ESSAYS ON

1

PRESS HISTORY AND WORK,

PAST AND PRESENT,



BY

ALFRED BAKER,
F.C.S.

Member of the Institute of Journalists (Incorporated).

"The Press is the impersonation of a grand cosmopolitan Revolution,—not revolution in the anarchic or worst sense of the term, but in the sense of a great moral, social, and political transformation."—*James Grant*.

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PREFACE.

In the following chapters the attempt has been made to present in a succinct form the chief incidents in the history of British Journalism, from its early days down to the granting of the Royal Charter—a period of more than two centuries-and-a-half—and to give some account of the journalist's vocation, in all its varied phases, in the present day.

The story of the struggle and ultimate triumph of the Press of our land over Government censorship, repressive laws, crushing fiscal imposts, and all the forces of prejudice and ignorance, forms a branch of national history as important, as interesting, and as full of lessons for the present and the future, as any part of the narrative of the struggle for religious and political liberty. In a compendious volume like the present—where the historical retrospect forms only a portion of the scheme of contents—it is possible to present only the outlines of newspaper history, but it is hoped that what has been written may prove a useful introduction to the study of such works as the late Mr James Grant's "The Newspaper Press," and Mr H. R. Fox Bourne's "English Newspapers." The

PREFACE.

long and interesting story of Parliamentary reporting has not been touched on, because it was felt that to treat it adequately would need, not a chapter, but a volume.

For the general reader, some account is given of the functions of the various members of the newspaper staff in the present day, from the editor downwards, and—without making the description at all technical—the conditions of newspaper production and the methods of work have been described in a fashion which it is hoped will interest and inform, and at the same time serve to clear away some of the misconceptions which still exist in the public mind on these subjects. It is not imagined that in this there is much, if anything, which is not familiar to every member of the profession to which the author feels it an honor to belong, but he claims at least to have endeavored to portray faithfully and describe truthfully newspaper workers and work as they exist.

THE NEWSPAPER WORLD.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF BRITISH NEWSPAPERS TO THE ABOLITION OF THE CENSORSHIP.

1622-1695.

For almost all that keeps up in us, permanently and effectually, the spirit of regard to liberty and the public good, we must look to the unshackled and independent energies of the press.—*Hallam*.



LOOKING back over the last two centuries and a half of this country's history, there are few features in our national progress which can be regarded with more unmixed satisfaction than the growth of the Press, on whose unshackled energies Hallam tells us we must rely for almost the only effectual stimulus to public spirit. In spite of restrictions of the most vexatious and crushing character, the Newspaper Press of England, taken as a whole, has ever been honorably conspicuous in its efforts to stimulate "the spirit of regard to liberty and the public good." Even though too often used as a mere weapon of partizan warfare, and too frequently marked by the imperfections and prejudices of its conductors, yet the important fact remains that much of the religious, moral, political, fiscal, and social reform of our country has become, through the Press, not merely known to the great mass of Englishmen, but actively propagated, and, by the force of public opinion thus stimulated, brought to a successful issue. In attempting to describe in a compendious fashion the origin and growth of an institution so impor-

tant, it is hardly possible to do other than take the reader over a well-trodden road, but the effort shall at least be made to point out milestones of progress hitherto, it may be, overlooked, while essaying to give a clear view of the striking features observable in each stage of the onward journey.

It was a century and a half after William Caxton set up the first printing press in England that Nathaniel Butter printed the first weekly newspaper. News was probably disseminated by means of the printing press some time earlier, but not generally by private enterprise. (In Queen Elizabeth's time, for example, the Government seems to have distributed printed intelligence about the defeat of the Spanish Armada, but private effort in this direction was practically stifled.) As Macaulay tells us, "No man could print without a licence; and every work had to undergo the scrutiny of the Primate or of the Bishop of London." There was the same desire for news among Englishmen of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as is to be found in all ranks of society in the present day, and the demand was met by the circulation of written news-letters sent from London to the country, and containing all the information that the writers were able to gather at the coffee-houses and other places of public resort. Nathaniel Butter, who was one of these news writers, almost at the close of the reign of the first Stuart monarch, conceived the idea of *printing* his news-letters. In all probability he did this at first experimentally and at irregular intervals, but in 1622, under the title of *The Certaine News of the Present Week*, he commenced a weekly journal with numbered issues. Some of these small early newspapers were partly printed sheets, with a blank portion left for private communications. A forerunner of the large family of *Flying Posts* was thus announced :

If any gentleman has a wish to oblige his country friend or correspondent with his account of public affairs, he may have it for two-pence, of J. Salisbury, at the Rising Sun in Cornhill, on a sheet of fine paper, half of which being blank; he may there write his own private business, or the material news of the day.

Nathaniel Butter, as the father of our English newspapers, deserves to rank next to Caxton in the honorable roll of names associated with the English press. In the seventeenth century the rulers in Church and State were not favorable to the free circulation of information or the free expression of opinion. Some courage must have been required to start the first newspaper in the time of the Star Chamber, and when the penalties likely to be exacted on the person of an offending printer were whipping, the pillory, imprisonment, degradation of various kinds, mutilation, and even death. Periodical publications of a political character, which could not probably in most cases be designated newspapers, appeared in profusion during the stormy days of Charles I., and ran the gauntlet of censorship and prohibitive regulations with more or less success. During the Commonwealth the censorship was rigorously exercised, and there was not that freedom of the Press which some writers have claimed. One feature about the early days of the Press must, however, be noted. For rather more than thirty years after newspapers began, they had no advertisements. Mr James Grant discovered the first advertisement in the *Commonwealth Mercury* for November 25th, 1658—just after Cromwell's death. This paper inserted advertisements at "the extremely moderate price of 1½d. and 2d. a line!" With the commencement of advertising we may imagine that the Newspaper Press was beginning to attain a general circulation, and was regarded as a useful and convenient vehicle for public announcements.

Before the English Press had completed the first half-century of its existence, its growing importance attracted

the attention of the Government of the day, and two years after the restoration of Charles II., namely in 1662, a Licensing Act was passed which for many years silenced the Press of England as effectually as the Russian Press is silenced in the present day when it falls under the displeasure of the censorship. Not only was the Press ruthlessly crushed, but the Government and the censor between them took full advantage of their power to become practically the only newspaper proprietors in the kingdom. The censor was Sir Roger l'Estrange, who had been himself previously connected with the Press, and what could be more natural than that, having put down the newspapers, he should start, some two or three years after the Act was enforced, his own *Public Intelligencer*. But the censor met with competition from an unexpected quarter. In 1665 the Court was temporarily removed to Oxford on account of the Plague of London, and here the Government started its own gazette, which was afterwards reprinted in London. This newspaper has enjoyed an uninterrupted existence since the year named, as the *London Gazette*.⁽¹⁾ Macaulay, describing the Government organ, tells us that, "whatever was communicated to it was in the most meagre and formal style," but we may suppose that the high sanction of its contents gave it an importance to which even Sir Roger's publication, that

1. The *London Gazette* is the most profitable of the newspapers owned by the nation, yielding at the present time a revenue of from £16,000 to £17,000 yearly. Its editorship at a salary of £800 was formerly given to some gentleman connected with the Press who had done important party service to the Government of the day. Mr Gladstone last exercised the patronage in 1869. Mr Thomas Walker, who had been editor of the *Daily News* for a long period, was then appointed, and continued to hold the position till the end of 1888, when he resigned, and the post was abolished under the Stationery Office re-organization scheme. During the railway mania, the *London Gazette* was published daily in the month of November, 1846. The largest number of the official organ ever published was on the 15th of the month named. It consisted of 583 pages and was printed on 145 sheets.

had but a short career, could not pretend. Besides the *London Gazette* there is but one other newspaper in England which can lay claim to a history going back to the seventeenth century. This is a bi-weekly paper, practically unknown to the general public; and, like its elder contemporary, is destitute of the attractive features of the modern newspaper. It is entitled the *Course of the Exchange*, was started in 1697, and is still the official organ of the Stock Exchange.⁽²⁾

After being enforced for seventeen years, the Licensing Act was allowed to expire in 1679. Six years later, however, when James II. came to the throne, the law was revived, and continued for another ten years, so that it was in force at the time of the Revolution and for some years of the reign of William and Mary. In 1695 the country grew tired of a muzzled Press, and the law was abolished. Some politicians, however, still hankered after the censorship, but Hallam states that "the less courtly Whigs combined with the Tories and Jacobites to defeat" the resuscitation of the censorship. Sir Roger l'Estrange, who for almost a generation had persecuted the English Press by the infliction of brutal punishments, happily long since obsolete, met with poetic justice. He was himself sent to Newgate about this time for giving publicity to treasonable papers, and ended his life ignobly.

2. The *Edinburgh Gazette* was established 1699-1700. For accurate information on the dates of early newspapers, see the chronological list, annotated, in "May's Press Guide."

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE IMPOSITION OF THE STAMP DUTY TO MR FOX'S LIBEL BILL.

1712-1792.

What wondrous labors of the press and pen ;
Diurnal most, some thrice each week affords,
Some only once—Oh, avarice of words !

Endless it were to sing the powers of all,
Their names, their numbers ; how they rise and fall.

Crabbe.

RELIEVED from the restrictions of the censorship, the closing years of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century witnessed a great development of newspaper enterprise. During the reign of William and Mary, and in the early years of Anne, the English Press enjoyed, in fact, a freedom from Government control and taxation denied to it for the century and a half which followed the imposition of the Stamp Duty. In 1702, the closing year of William's reign, the earliest daily newspaper was started in this country under the title of the *Daily Courant*, and, as the pioneer of the great daily journals of to-day, deservedly enjoyed, after some early difficulties, a lengthened and prosperous existence. One small folio page of printed matter was all that this first daily journal contained. It was announced to the public in the following quaint terms :—" This *Courant* (as the title shews) will be Publish'd Daily ; being design'd to give all the Material News as soon as every Post arrives ; and is confined to half the Compass to save the Publick

at least half the impertinences of ordinary newspapers." In the present competitive age, the *Courant's* self-denying principle is, alas, no longer observed, and some daily papers give their readers more matter in a day than the *Courant* did in a year. Though this paper has not survived till the present time, there are twelve newspapers still published in different parts of the country which saw the light in the first twenty years of the eighteenth century and bear witness to the journalistic activity of the period.⁽¹⁾ But a new enemy to the growth of the Press made its appearance early in this century, which it was found more difficult to defeat than the censorship. This was the stamp duty, first imposed on newspapers in 1712, and not finally abolished till the middle of the present century.

The stamp duties of various kinds, which have played so important a part in Imperial finances since the Revolution, appear to have been borrowed from the Dutch, and were, and are still, a favorite method of Chancellors of the Exchequer for raising revenue. It is not surprising that the financial authorities of the day, casting about for means of raising money, should have directed their attention to the newspapers which were becoming a flourishing institution in the land. The first proposal for a newspaper stamp duty was made in the sixth and last Parliament summoned by William III., a year before his death, namely in 1701. Whole sheets, it was suggested, should

1. The editor of May's "British and Irish Press Guide," as the result of careful research into the history of existing newspapers, places the following at the beginning of the seventeenth century, trustworthy facts being forthcoming in support of the years assigned for the dates of commencement:—1705, *Dublin Gazette*; 1709, *Worcester Postman* (*Berrow's Worcester Journal*); 1710, *Nottingham Weekly Courant* (*Nottinghamshire Weekly Express*); 1711, *Newcastle Courant*; 1712-3, *Stamford Mercury*; 1713, *Bristol Postman* (*Bristol Times and Mirror*); 1713, *British Chronicle* (*Hereford Journal*); 1714, *Norwich Mercury*; 1717, *Kentish Post* (*Kentish Gazette*); 1718, *Leeds Mercury*; 1720, *Ipswich Journal*; 1720, *Northampton Mercury*.

be taxed a penny and half-sheets a half-penny. But the newspaper proprietors of the day raised a strenuous and successful protest, and for ten years the evil was averted. In Anne's reign, during the administration of Harley, when party spirit ran high, and the occurrences which led up to the Peace of Utrecht were engrossing attention, the stamp duty was levied, as previously proposed. Every newspaper lawfully issued from the press was thenceforth required to bear in the corner one of those stamps in red ink which were continued down to our own time; and, when abolished for revenue purposes thirty-five years ago, were continued for postal use down to 1870. The increases in the newspaper tax were made chiefly in the reign of George III., and were attended with a consequent increase in the price of newspapers, so that sevenpence was at length the usual charge for an article directly and indirectly taxed above its commercial value several times over. The penny duty was raised to $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ in 1776, to $2d.$ in 1789, to $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ in 1794, and to $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ in 1797, the year before Pitt levied the first income-tax. The increased taxation was due almost entirely to the immense war expenditure which had to be met at this time.

These increasing imposts tended to make newspapers essentially an article of luxury, which could only be purchased by the well-to-do. Though there was, of course, less general demand for newspapers than in later years, owing to a large section of the people being without education, yet, as the result of taxation, surreptitious endeavors—often attended with success for a time—were made to supply the people with cheap newspapers. These attempts were, however, more boldly and effectively carried out during the next century. But up to the middle of the eighteenth century, while the stamp duty remained at a penny, the growth of the press was very marked, insomuch that Dr Johnson bore testimony that "Journals are daily

multiplied without increase of knowledge," and Crabbe lamented in poetic strain,

A daily swarm that banish every Muse,
Come flying forth and mortals call them News.

A formidable check to the free expression of opinion existed in the shape of the law of libel, as administered at Westminster Hall during practically the whole of the eighteenth century. Several well-known trials find a place in English history, but there were, of course, many cases of undistinguished newspaper conductors who were punished for giving expression in their columns to what would be considered in the present day the most ordinary criticism of governments and statesmen. Trial by jury, it is true, was the course pursued in these proceedings, but so little was committed to the twelve men empaneled that their assistance in the trial was almost purely formal. The jury were only asked to say whether they were satisfied that the particular passage branded as libelous was published by the accused; the judges decided whether a criminal or innocent interpretation should be put on the words. Neither was evidence in support of the truth of the alleged libel admitted, or was it even allowed to be urged in extenuation. With corrupt or servile judges, the results of trials for libel were not uncertain. After much controversy, and after the House of Lords had the year before thrown out the measure, there passed into law in 1792 Mr Fox's Libel Bill, which is briefly but comprehensively described by Hallam as, "declaring the right of the jury to find a general verdict upon the whole matter." The century closes with a piece of retrograde press legislation which led to many prosecutions, entitled "A Bill for preventing the mischief arising from newspapers being printed and published by persons unknown, and of regulating them in these respects."

Englishmen, now far removed from the partizan strife

of the period can, however, never contemplate but with unmixed pleasure many of the productions which emanated from the newspaper and periodical press of the century under notice. Though overwhelmed by taxation, enjoying none of the present facilities, mechanical or locomotive, for attaining a wide circulation, and without the stimulus which the support of the great mass of the people gives, there was a literary excellence about the press contributions of that day which has not been surpassed, even if it has been equaled, in later and more favored times. A proof of this is seen in the fact that many of the contributions to contemporary publications have become part of the classical literature of the nation. Highly favored, indeed, were the journals which could boast of having first given to the world the political wisdom of Defoe, the Parliamentary reporting of Johnson, the critical and humorous essays of Addison, or the statesmanship of Burke.

CHAPTER III.

LONDON AND COUNTY NEWSPAPERS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

This folio of four pages, happy work !
Which not e'en critics criticise

What is it but a map of busy life,
Its fluctuations and its vast concerns ?

Cowper.

BETWEEN the newspapers of the eighteenth century and those of the present day, there is as great a dissimilarity as between the stage-coach of past times and the express railway train of to-day. News is now printed and circulated with a speed which a century ago would have been deemed miraculous. Even from remote quarters of the world the electric wire brings intelligence of noteworthy events, and the news is published almost simultaneously with their occurrence. Hardly has the applause with which the peroration of some great orator is greeted ceased to echo through the hall, ere the printed sheet makes its appearance, it may be hundreds of miles distant, with a full report of the speech fresh from the lips of the speaker. These, of course, are feats which mechanical and scientific progress have made possible, and the English newspaper press, more than any other intellectual enterprise—owing to the perfect freedom it enjoys from Governmental control—is able and ready to avail itself of everything which can facilitate the rapid collection and distribution of news.

Modern inventions and progress have undoubtedly tended greatly to intellectual alertness. Such alertness may not be without its disadvantages, not so much perhaps as regards the presentation of news, as of opinion.

Crude ideas, resting on a very slender foundation, are too often presented to the public where the writer has to supply daily a certain quantity of comment on the political, social, or intellectual problems of the hour. In this respect the Press of the past had an advantage, and this is shown in the more finished and permanent character of the articles which found a place in the pages of the Press of the eighteenth century. Such contributions were, of course, not to be met with every day, and the papers were not, speaking generally, equipped with competent literary staffs, but depended for much of the high character of their contents on men who, either by means of their contributions to the Press were making the first steps which led to literary fame, or on others who were of the character of those eminent specialists who, now-a-days, on questions of importance, address letters to the *Times*. There was no reporting either of the doings of Imperial or local bodies worthy of the name; and the proceedings of the Law Courts were not recorded in the Press. A noticeable feature in the papers of the period was, however, gossip paragraphs about the Court and society, and lengthy extracts from semi-private letters of foreign correspondents relative to Continental politics and campaigns. Some description of two or three typical country and London papers will give an idea of the Press of the eighteenth century.

Country newspapers which were established during this period were usually started by printers or booksellers of a literary turn of mind, men of some culture who were able to use their pen with good effect. They often took a leading part in the local controversies of the day, but, curious to relate, they did not greatly concern themselves in the collection of local news. This arose in a large measure, no doubt, from the limited area in which the local Press circulated. A local event would be considered

sufficiently well known to the neighborhood, without being described in print, while the district would be more interested in London news, in foreign affairs, and in what had occurred in the next county. These are the lines on which much of the country journalism of the period seems to have been conducted. The careers of many of these early newspaper pioneers are deserving of more attention from local antiquarians than they have yet received. Indeed the history of the early Press throws much light on the intellectual condition of provincial England during the last century, and hence demands more attentive cultivation.

Few cities or towns of England can boast of a more interesting or eventful newspaper history than Exeter. How interesting that history is, is shown in a recent contribution, dealing with its beginning, by Dr T. N. Brushfield, in the *Transactions of the Devonshire Society* (vol. xx.) He there gives a most interesting outline of the life of Andrew Brice (1690 or 1692-1773), author, journalist, printer, and publisher of the first Exonian newspaper. "From his teens," the writer says, "to the end of his long life he was a journalist, at a time when journalism implied unremitting hard work and scanty pay." Brice's paper consisted of six small pages, with the title forming the first page. It was not till the thirteenth number that the first item of local news appeared. The earliest advertisements were of patent medicines, and, in respect to these, it may be noted that down to twenty years ago it was not unusual at country newspaper offices to keep a stock of the patent medicines then advertised, which were distributed by the newsmen who took the country rounds. The first Exeter paper was started in 1714, but Dr Brushfield states that it was not till 1725 that the Stamp Duty was imposed. Down to that time the paper escaped with the very small tax of 3s. per impres-

sion, its diminutive size doubtless enabling it to pass as a pamphlet. It was not long before a rival newspaper appeared, and the title-pages of these two early eighteenth century journals will give a good idea of the newspaper enterprise of the period. They run as follows :—

Numb. I. The Exeter Mercury: or, WEEKLY INTELLIGENCE of NEWS being A FAITHFUL ABSTRACT of all the *News Papers* of Note: Containing the Material Occurrences FOREIGN and DOMESTICK With a Particular Account of what BOOKS and PAMPHLETS are Publish'd in *Great Britain, France, Holland, &c.* N.B. Advertisements are taken in at the usual Prices. Friday, September 24, 1714. Exon: Printed by Philip Bishop at his Printing-Office in *St Peter's Churchyard*, 1714. *To be continu'd Weekly.* Price Three Half-Pence.

Numb. IV. The Protestant Mercury: or, the EXETER POST-BOY with NEWS FOREIGN and DOMESTICK being The most Remarkable Occurrences, impartially collected, as Occasion offers, from the *Evening-Post, Gazette, Votes, Flying Post, Weekly Packet, Dormer's Letter, Postscript to the Post-Man, &c.* So that no other can pretend to have a better Collection. Publish'd every TUESDAY and FRIDAY. Price, seal'd for the Country 10s. *per Annum.* And for the Convenience of those that will take the same but Once a Week, it is so order'd that every Friday's Paper will contain three Posts, or the whole Weeks News. *Advertisements will be incerted at Reasonable Rates.* This paper circulates Forty Miles round, and several Hundreds dispers'd every Week. Friday, October the 7th, 1715. Printed by JOS BLISS at his New Printing-House near the *London-Inn* without *East-Gate.*

It is not proposed to relate here the early history of the *Times*, the centenary of which so recently took place, but its prospectus on changing its title from that of the *Universal Register*, on January 1st, 1788, is so quaintly humorous, and affords so good an insight into the character of the metropolitan Press enterprise of the century, that it may be reproduced here by way of completing the contrast between newspaper work then and now. This initial number of the *Times* was without leading articles and had but fifty-seven advertisements. This is how the new journal was introduced to the public :—

The *Times*! What a monstrous name. Granted—for the *Times* is a many-headed monster that speaks with a hundred tongues, and

displays a thousand characters, and in the course of its transitions in life, assumes innumerable shapes and humors.

The heads of the *Times*, as already has been said are many ; these will, however, not always appear at the same time, but casually, as public or private affairs should call them forth.

The principal or leading heads are :—the Literary, Political, Commercial, Philosophical, Critical, Theatrical, Fashionable, Humorous, Witty, &c. &c., each of which are supplied with a competent share of intellect for the pursuit of their several functions ; an endowment which is not in all cases to be found, even in the heads of the State, the heads of the Church, the heads of the Law, the heads of the Navy, the heads of the Army, and, though last not least, the great heads of the Universities.

The political head of the *Times*, like that of Janus, the Roman deity, is double-faced ; with one countenance it will smile continually on the friends of Old England, and with the other will frown incessantly on her enemies.

CHAPTER IV.
THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM.
1815-1861.

Make knowledge circle with the winds.—*Tennyson*.

IN 1815, the year of Waterloo, the Stamp Duty reached its height, an additional halfpenny bringing it up to the oppressive impost of 4*d.* for every newspaper. In addition to this, advertisements were heavily taxed, and there was an intolerable duty on paper. With such fiscal burdens, it is surprising that newspaper enterprise was at all successful. The Government made the newspaper so costly that, as Mr Justin McCarthy, M.P., in his "History of Our Own Times," has aptly put it, "Its possession was a luxury of the rich ; those who could afford less had to be content with an occasional read of a paper. It was common for a number of persons to club together and take in a paper, which they read by turns, the general understanding being that the one whose turn came last remained in possession of the journal. It was considered a fair compensation for his late reception of the news that he should come into the full proprietorship of the precious journal."⁽¹⁾ The heavy taxation led, as might naturally be supposed, to the surreptitious issue of unstamped papers, and the adventures of their printers and salesmen in eluding the vigilance of the revenue officers form a diverting episode in the romance of the Press. The issues of one smuggled newspaper were, for a long time, taken from the printer's house in coffins till the extraordinary "mortality" attracted the attention of the authorities. Between

1. History of Our Own Times, vol. iii., chap. xli.

1832 and 1834, Mr Grant says that 500 persons were imprisoned for selling unstamped papers, and prosecutions were instituted against 700 of these publications. Generally speaking, the tone of this surreptitious Press was bad, and its scurrilous articles anything but creditable.

The reign of William IV. saw the last of those Government prosecutions for libel—in other words criticism of the administration of the period—which, if attempted now by any Government, or by any member of a Government, would be considered an unwarrantable infringement of freedom of speech. The final prosecutions occurred during the Tory administration of the Duke of Wellington in 1830, and the Whig administration of Earl Grey in 1831. In the closing days of the last reign, and during the Government of Viscount Melbourne, the Stamp Duty was reduced to the more moderate imposition of a penny, a result which may be considered one of the first fruits of the Reformed Parliament. But this was not accomplished without a struggle. In 1832 Sir E. Bulwer Lytton had led an attack on the Stamp Duty in the House of Commons. The Advertisement Duty was lowered in the following year, but it was not till 1836 that the Government proposed, and carried into law, the reduction of the Stamp Duty to a penny. This concession did not, however, abate the ardor of those who were contending for the freedom of the Press. Their efforts assumed an organized form in the course of the next fifteen years, and the Association for the Repeal of Taxes on Knowledge came into existence. The first Parliamentary victory was achieved during the administration of the Earl of Aberdeen, when Mr Gladstone was for the first time Chancellor of the Exchequer. An attack was made on the Advertisement Duty, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer declared himself unable to do without it, and sought to retain it at 6*d.* instead of 1*s.* 6*d.* But by a majority of

five, the House of Commons decided during the session of 1853 to abolish the tax on Advertisements.

The Stamp Duty did not long survive the abolition of the Advertisement Duty. Two years later, this ancient financial impost, which had been exacted for nearly a century and a half, was abolished at a time when a gloomy war cloud rested over the country and to some extent obscured the importance of this pacific reform. Mr Gladstone was no longer Chancellor of the Exchequer. On the fall of the Aberdeen administration he continued in office for a short time during Lord Palmerston's Government, but he retired from office on grounds which are historic, and the abolition of the duty was proposed by Sir George Cornewall Lewis, and approved by resolution of the House on 15th June, 1855. For postal purposes the penny red stamp was retained, but it finally disappeared from the corners of our newspapers on 30th September, 1870, when halfpenny postage was introduced.

Thus was the attack on one of the most obnoxious Taxes on Knowledge carried to a successful issue. Speaking to Mr John Cassell in 1850, Cobden had said, "So long as the penny lasts there can be no daily Press for the middle or working-class. Who below the rank of a merchant or wholesale dealer can afford to take in a daily paper at fivepence?" The result of the high-priced Press was, as Cobden further pointed out, that it was written for its customers among the aristocracy, the millionaires, and clubland. "The governing class of this country," he added, "will resist the removal of the penny stamp, not on account of the loss of revenue (*that* is no obstacle with a surplus of two or three millions), but because they know that the stamp makes the daily Press the instrument and servant of the oligarchy."² Five years after this conversa-

2. Life of Cobden (John Morley), chap. xxxii.

tion, when the Government of the day was adding sixteen millions to the National Debt, it did manage to do without the revenue from stamped newspapers.

Encouraged to persevere, financial reformers next attacked the remaining tax on the Press, namely, the Paper Duty. Here triumph was not so readily achieved. The opinion of leading politicians was in sharp conflict. English manufacturers were afraid of foreign competition, and the high-priced journals were against any change which would increase the number of newspapers. In the session of 1860, in the House of Commons, the removal of the excise on paper was carried by Mr Gladstone, but by diminishing majorities; the third reading was passed by only nine votes. When the proposal came before the House of Lords it was rejected by a very decisive majority. With Mr Bright at its head, an active agitation was carried on between the sessions of 1860 and 1861. There was much political turmoil, and there was a constitutional struggle between the two Houses. All this is a matter of history, but it will suffice to say here, that on 1st October, 1861, Mr Gladstone removed paper from the list of dutiable articles, and thus liberated the Press from its last fiscal fetter.

For nearly thirty years that freedom has been enjoyed, and to-day the newspapers of this country are the cheapest, as they are in many respects the best, in the world. The free Press of England has not been the evil which some great men had apprehended. Cobden, in one of his letters, is very severe on sentimentalists who utter fine expressions but are not to be depended on for political action. He instances the fact that Dickens had refused to sign a petition for the repeal of the taxes on knowledge "on the express ground that he would not promote a deluge of printer's ink in England similar to what he had

seen in America." (8) Thanks to the sound sense of Englishmen, the apprehensions of the author of "Martin Chuzzlewit," which aroused the indignation of Cobden, were not realised. It is true we have a "deluge" of cheap newspapers and periodicals, but, as a general rule, the cheaper they are the more wholesome they are found to be.

3. Life of Cobden, chap. xxiv.

CHAPTER V.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE FREE PRESS.

1861-1890.

In England there are four parties—individuals, the Press, Parliament, and political parties—and all enjoy freedom of speech and use it. . . . I have no desire to flatter ; but I am convinced that of all the four parties mentioned the largest advance has been made by the Press—of course I mean the highest portion of the Press, which carries a high standard of national honor.—*Earl of Carnarvon.*



SINCE the Newspaper Press has been free, its growth and improvement have been little short of marvelous. In the various towns of the United Kingdom these advances have been, by comparison, more marked than in London itself ; in other words the Provincial Press is, through various circumstances, now able to give its readers many things which before were to be found only in the London newspapers. Railway and telegraphic facilities have deprived Metropolitan papers of the advantage they once enjoyed in the priority of publication of many matters of interest. The London daily newspapers still have distinctive features of excellence arising from the literary ability of their staffs, and the enterprise and care exercised in every department of their undertakings, which only the very best of Provincial newspapers can approach ; but for copious and early news, and an interesting survey of the day's events, the morning paper which appears in Scotland, in Ireland, or in the Midlands, will be found quite as good as a journal issued from the precincts of Fleet Street.

A brief glance at the comparative increase in the number of London and country newspapers, since the Paper Duty was repealed, will show how enormously Press enterprise has developed in the country, as compared with the

less marked increase in the number of daily papers issued in London. The explanation is, of course, that, while a great fortune needs to be sunk to start a properly equipped London paper with any chance of success, it often happens that a provincial daily can be started on a far less ambitious scale, as the offspring of some prosperous weekly, and with increasing support gradually developed. Before 1861 there were seventeen daily papers of all descriptions published in London, which are at present in existence. Since that date thirteen additional daily papers have been established, making the total issued in 1890, thirty. It is difficult to estimate the exact number of Provincial papers which appeared previous to 1861, because a good many existing dailies are dated from their original establishment as weekly journals, but the number was certainly under a score, while to-day there are about 170 daily papers published in the United Kingdom outside London. The growth of the Provincial weekly Press during the last thirty years has been still greater, and the improvement still more marked.

If we consider this development a little more in detail, especially in relation to the Daily Press of the country, we shall see that several things have stimulated its enterprise and growth. Politicians in these democratic times are for ever sighing for organs which will champion their cause, and many papers owe their establishment to the not very lofty motive of providing a party organ. But a great newspaper cannot be devoted solely to political interests, and if the news departments of the paper are conducted with enterprise, the journal will enjoy what is more valuable in the long run than political patronage, namely, the general support of the public, irrespective, in a measure, of the views advocated in the leading columns. The general diffusion of education has undoubtedly had much to do with the development of the Press, from the fact

that the reading public is now co-extensive with the nation. In Mr Walter Besant's "Fifty Years Ago ; or the Queen's Accession," a sketch is given of a group in a country town, where the stage coach has just arrived, assembled around a man reading a paper aloud. The picture bears the inscription, "Arrival of the Coronation number of the *Sun*—one paper and one man who can read it in the town." Now, happily, not one man but every man in the town can read his newspaper. Not only so, but every town has its own newspaper, and generally two, so that neither political party may suffer from being unrepresented.

Of the causes which have especially led to the growth of the Daily Press during the last half of the Victorian era, a prominent place must be assigned to the development of rapid machine printing and also to the acquirement of the telegraphic system of the country by the Government, with the establishment of a cheap uniform rate for the transmission of news. On the introduction of the Government telegraphic scheme, in 1868, at least a dozen daily papers came into existence in the United Kingdom down to 1870. In the next decade no less than forty dailies were established, which, to some extent at any rate, owed their inception to the cheapness of the telegraphic supplies of news from the different agencies. Since 1880, a remarkable impulse has been given to the establishment of evening newspapers by the growing popularity of this class of journalism, and of the fifty additional daily papers started between the date just mentioned and the present time, nearly all are evening journals. These figures relate to new papers ; if weeklies converted to dailies were added, the number would be greater.

Few will gainsay that the journalists of our own country have made an honest and a generous use of their freedom in the interests of the public. Enough has surely been said to show that the Earl of Carnarvon was well within

the mark when he said that the Press, in availing itself of the inestimable privilege of freedom of speech, had made greater advances than any other party in the State. When Queen Victoria began her reign, the whole of the United Kingdom, including the Metropolis, possessed only sixteen daily newspapers. In the year of Her Majesty's Jubilee about 200 journals appeared every day, and the number is yearly increasing. Who will be bold enough to prophesy how great may be the advance of the British Press in the next half century?

CHAPTER VI

ORGANIZATION OF JOURNALISM.

I myself am a gentleman of the Press, and have no other scutcheon.—*Benjamin Disraeli (1853).*



COBBETT in an often quoted passage expressed the desire to have the editors of his day assembled in Hyde Park, in order that the public might be disillusionized in respect to the editorial "we," by beholding the assembled editors in their proper persons. History does not record that the sturdy old journalist's wish was gratified ; but the editors, and indeed all ranks of journalists in the present day, certainly cannot be accused of any disposition to shun the public gaze, or to refrain from coming before their countrymen in the promotion of various organizations designed to improve the well-being of journalism as a whole, and to assert its claim to take up its rightful position among the liberal professions of the country. In his introductory address in the *Daily News*, 'more than forty years ago, Dickens foreshadowed, as an object of worthy ambition for any leaders of the Press in England, that they should organize journalism into a national and self-respecting institution. Let us see first what was Dickens's ideal, and then consider how far it has been carried into effect in recent years. "We especially invite," wrote the first editor of the *Daily News*, "the attention to one feature we have marked out for ourselves. We seek, as far as in us lies, to elevate the character of the public Press in England. We believe it would attain a much higher position, and that those who wield its powers would be infinitely more respected as a class, and an important one, if it were purged of a disposition to sordid attacks

upon itself, which only prevails in England and America. We discern nothing in the editorial plural that justifies a gentleman, or body of gentlemen, in discrediting a gentleman's forbearance and responsibility, and venting ungenerous spleen against a rival, by a perversion of a great power—a power, however, which is only great so long as it is good and honest." These admirable precepts, it is satisfactory to know, Dickens himself carried into practice. He was one of the early supporters of the Newspaper Press Fund, and president at its second annual festival. This Fund was the first attempt on the part of journalists to unite for a common object—except the organization, some years earlier, of country newspaper proprietors for the protection of their trade interests.

The Provincial Newspaper Society was founded on the 25th April, 1836, and its second annual meeting took place in the week of the Queen's Coronation. The Society has done good work during its career of more than half-a-century, and though fortunately it has no longer to take part in the agitation for the removal of fiscal imposts, which in the first instance induced some of the most eminent of the country newspaper proprietors to band together for mutual action, it has still a constant and increasing work in the protection of newspaper proprietors from the designs of the unscrupulous ; in looking after the law as it applies to journalistic enterprise, and, where necessary, seeking its reform ; and, generally, in seeing that no opportunity is lost of promoting the success of newspaper work. When the Government took over the telegraphic system of the country, and decided to give a specially cheap rate for the transmission of news, the Press Association was formed, as an offshoot of the parent society, for the collection and transmission of news to subscribers. Both parent and child have grown with the growth of English journalism in the last half-century

and in the jubilee year of the Society the Press Association paid to the Post Office for telegraphing messages alone £36,000, making it without doubt the largest customer which the Government has, or is likely to have.

Reform of the law of libel, as affecting newspapers, has been for some years past an object to which the Provincial Newspaper Society has devoted its best energies. With the support of the Society, the late Mr J. D. Hutchinson, M.P. for Halifax, after much honorable exertion succeeded in getting through Parliament the Newspaper Libel and Registration Act of 1881, which first gave to journalists "privilege" for any fair and accurate report of meetings lawfully convened, and formed the basis on which Sir Algernon Borthwick, Bart., M.P., was able to establish the more extensive and valuable Law of Libels Amendment Act, 1888. The promotion of the last mentioned Act was not, however, left exclusively to the country newspaper proprietors. There was a joint Libel Law Reform Committee, formed of representatives of both the London and the country Press, and out of that has grown the extension of the Provincial Newspaper Society which is indicated in its present more general title, "The Newspaper Society." This change was effected at a meeting held in London on 27th May, 1889, when it was resolved, in the presence of a large and representative gathering, to broaden the basis of the old Society, so that all newspaper proprietors might join; the word "Provincial," which for fifty years had formed part of the Society's title, being erased from it. Sir A. Borthwick was elected the first president, and Mr H. Whorlow, for many years associated with the old Society, continues to fill the post of secretary. The objects of the re-constituted Society, as set forth in the scheme then agreed on were these:—

1. To promote and safeguard newspaper interests in Parliament and in the different Government departments.

2. To watch the operation of the Law of Libel, to initiate such reforms therein as may from time to time appear necessary, and to provide a central machinery by means of which members of the Society who are proceeded against for libel may, at their own expense, obtain advice, and enter into combination for their common defence.

3. To promote co-operation among members of the Society in all matters affecting their common interest.

The army of journalists in the country who were not proprietors, practically had no organization for the promotion of common professional interests till within the last few years, but the Newspaper Press Fund, instituted in 1864, was, as far as benevolent effort went, a bond of union for journalists of every degree throughout the country. In its annual reports it has truly pointed out that "prior to its formation there was no such organization in existence, and the Press presented this strange anomaly, that while it was constantly and successfully advocating the claims of institutions founded for the benefit of unfortunate members of other classes of society, there was no provision whatever for similar cases connected with its own body." Established on its present basis in the year already mentioned, Lord Houghton was elected president, and for more than twenty years the Fund owed no small share of its present prosperity to his kindly services. His successor is Sir A. Borthwick.⁽¹⁾ All literary contributors to the Press in the United Kingdom are eligible for membership to this Fund. Indeed it is the

1. The following have been the chairmen at the annual festivals since the foundation of the Fund:—1864, Lord Houghton; 1865, Charles Dickens; 1866, Earl Granville; 1867, Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone; 1868, Duke of Cambridge; 1869, Lord Houghton; 1870, Rt. Hon. W. H. Smith; 1871, Earl of Carnarvon; 1872, Duke of Argyll; 1873, J. A. Froude; 1874, Duke of Somerset; 1875, Dean Stanley; 1876, Lord O'Hagan; 1877, Marquis of Hartington; 1878, Marquis of Salisbury; 1879, Earl of Rosebery; 1880, Duke of Manchester; 1881, Sir S. H. Northcote, Bart.; 1882, Duke of Albany; 1883, Rt. Hon. H. C. E. Childers; 1884, Viscount Hampden; 1885, Dr W. Howard Russell; 1886, Sir A. Borthwick; 1887, F. C. Burnand; 1888, Sir Edward Clarke; 1889, Rt. Hon. G. J. Goschen.

most comprehensive of any of the Press institutions in the land, the following being entitled to participate in its benefits : proprietors, editors, managers, sub-editors, leader-writers, reviewers ; fine art, musical, and dramatic critics ; commercial writers, correspondents, at home and abroad (including the correspondents of foreign newspapers resident in the United Kingdom) ; and every class of reporters." For distressed members of the Fund, or their widows and orphans when unprovided for, generous and unostentatious assistance is rendered in the shape of grants of money, and many journalists who might otherwise have been badly worsted in the battle of life through sickness, want of employment, or other form of adversity, owe much to the helping hand of the Fund, while those left behind have been kept in respectability, and their children educated from the same benevolent source. Non-members have, of course, no claim on the Fund, but in cases of real distress even these have experienced in no inconsiderable numbers its benevolence. From the formation of the Fund to December, 1889, there had been a total of 996 grants to a total amount of £18,172. The sources of income of the Society are subscriptions, donations, legacies, dividends on investments, and a large sum received at the annual dinner. The list of subscribers includes all ranks of life from the Queen, the Prince of Wales, and the Royal Family, downwards. At the close of 1889 there were 393 London members, 290 country members, and five foreign ; total 688. Of late the officers of the Society have made a successful effort to induce more country journalists to join, and have addressed meetings at various centres with this object. The office of the Fund is at 55 Strand, London, W.C., and the secretary is Mr W. Thornton Sharp, B.A.

Several similar funds have been established in different parts of the country, the oldest and most important of

which is the Bristol and West of England Newspaper Press Fund. Instituted in 1868, it has a roll of about 90 members, and had from its commencement to the end of 1888 made 102 grants and loans to the amount of £1,303. Other similar Societies are the Press Benevolent and Superannuation Fund of South Wales and Monmouthshire ; the Essex Newspaper Press Fund ; and the Lower Thames Valley Journalists' Association. The bodies mentioned in the preceding sentence have not done more than make a good start, and it would seem highly desirable that some *modus vivendi* might be arrived at by which the Newspaper Press Fund of London might incorporate such bodies and afford the facilities in the shape of superannuation and annuities these aim at providing, which only a society with a large invested capital (£20,000) can attempt with any prospect of success.

For social intercourse flourishing Press clubs exist in the metropolis and some large provincial centres. The London Press Club has a present income of £3,000 a year, and has developed in a remarkable way in the last few years. The Birmingham Press Club is the pioneer among provincial clubs. It has five classes of members—journalists and heads of commercial departments in newspaper offices, with a guinea subscription ; district correspondents residing five miles or more from the Club, 5s. subscription ; honorary members, chiefly literary men, a guinea subscription ; life members, those connected with or prominent in the learned professions, a contribution of five guineas, or payment may be altogether dispensed with ; temporary members connected with the arts or sciences, 2s. 6d. subscription. The Sheffield and District Press Club has recently entered upon new premises, and has also five classes of members, though the qualifications are somewhat different from those just enumerated. Manchester has a well-established Press Club with three classes

of members, which includes gentlemen not connected with the Press in any way, who are introduced by pressmen. The Liverpool Press Club (Limited) was registered as a Company in 1886, and has three classes for ordinary, associate, and honorary members. Associate members are those not actually engaged in Press work, but identified with literature or otherwise desirable members, while honorary members are gentlemen of prominent public position. There is reason to anticipate that Press Clubs will become more numerous in the future, because they form in provincial towns, where membership is not rigidly confined to Press men, a convenient rendezvous for those of literary or artistic tastes, while the extending organization of the Press renders a "local habitation" especially desirable for the purpose of meetings and other gatherings which have from time to time to be convened in association with journalistic societies.

It was, indeed, owing to the efforts of the members or one of these institutions, namely the Manchester Press Club, that the Institute of Journalists was initiated. This now flourishing institution, which has overspread the land with its organization, and won the adhesion of over 1,600 journalists of all grades throughout Great Britain, originated with the pressmen of Manchester. Credit is due to them for much patient labor in the infant days of the National Association of Journalists, when it was not so easy as it is now to convince the journalistic world that an institution of vital importance to the profession was being promoted. Yet it must at the same time be admitted that the good seed sown at Manchester fell on fruitful soil. There was a general feeling that some institution was needed to combine the working pressmen of England in one united body, having for its common object the improvement of the professional status, and the safeguarding of general interests. There had, too, just at the time,

been afforded an example of the necessity of some organization when public bodies had to be approached, as in the case of the Board of Trade in 1883-4, to which an important protest had to be made to secure for journalists engaged as shorthand writers in the Bankruptcy Courts throughout the country, proper remuneration for their labor. For that occasion a Conference of Metropolitan and Provincial Shorthand Writers was formed—thanks, in a large measure, to the labors of Mr G. F. Gratwicke, of Exeter, (afterwards elected a Vice-President of the Institute,)—which was successful in obtaining a new rule giving shorthand writers the right to the same terms as before the new Act.

Through the minutes of the Manchester Press Club may be traced the steps which led to the establishment of the first organization of working journalists in this country for professional purposes. In March, 1881, at the monthly meeting of the Club, Mr Tipping, a member, read a paper on "The Position and Prospects of Pressmen." A discussion arose out of this as to the desirability of organizing a National Association of Pressmen, and the matter was discussed at several meetings in 1881-2 and committees appointed, without, however, any very definite result. But in March, 1884, a committee was appointed to take prompt and energetic measures for the establishment of a league or association of reporters, sub-editors, and others engaged on the Press of this country. In August of the same year this committee reported, with the result that a conference of journalists from various parts of the kingdom was convened at Birmingham 25th October, 1884, when the National Association of Journalists was established, and Mr H. Flint (president of the Manchester Press Club), was appointed its first president. Five years later the Association was converted into an Institute, and its objects set forth to be to secure the advancement of

journalism in all its branches ; to obtain for journalists, as journalists, formal and definite professional standing ; and to promote and serve in every possible way the interests of the profession of the Press.⁽²⁾ The constitution provides for the inclusion of all classes associated with the Press, from proprietors to pupils, in one or other of the five following classes, namely, members, fellows, associates, pupil associates, and honorary members. The history of the Institute may be conveniently epitomized in association with the general gatherings which have taken place as follows :—

1884. BIRMINGHAM. Formation Conference, convened from Manchester, held in October. National Association of Journalists formed with Mr H. Flint, of Manchester, as the first President.

1886. LONDON. Second Conference held in February. Sir Algernon Borthwick, Bart., M.P., of London, (*Morning Post*,) elected second President.

1887. LEEDS. Third Conference held in February. Sir A. Borthwick re-elected President.

1888. NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE. Fourth Conference held in February. Mr H. Gilzean Reid, of Birmingham and Middlesbrough, (*North Eastern Daily Gazette*,) elected third President.

1888. BRISTOL. Special Conference held in September to discuss the conversion of the Association into an Institute of Journalists.

1889. LONDON. Conversion of the old Association to the Institute confirmed at the Mansion House in March, and the Lord Mayor (Sir James Whitehead, Bart.), elected the first honorary member. Petition subsequently presented to Her Majesty in Council for the incorporation of the Institute.

1889. MANCHESTER. First Annual Conference of the Institute in October. Sir Thomas Sowler, Kt., of Manchester, (*Manchester Courier*,) appointed President-Elect. Mr H. G. Reid's term of office extended pending the decision of the Privy Council as to the charter.

1890. On February 8th the Queen in Council granted the petition of the Institute of Journalists for a Charter of Incorporation.

After little more than five years of work, the journalists of England—and their brethren in Scotland and Ireland are rapidly joining them—have been converted from an inorganized body to a chartered incorporation which en-

2. The practical work done by the Institute has thus been summarized : (1) An undertaking obtained from the Inspector-General

titles journalists to rank with the other learned professions of the land. The secret of the success which has crowned the movement is a very simple one. Earnest, enthusiastic, untiring work has welded the journalistic profession into a corporate body. Many newspaper men of high character and attainments have helped in the enterprise, but an especial meed of praise must be accorded to the first President under the charter, Mr Hugh Gilzean Reid, of Warley Hall, Warwickshire, and the Secretary, Mr Herbert Samuel Cornish, Central Office of the Institute, 78 Fleet street, London, E.C. The Incorporated Institute of Journalists is already a power in the land ; may it prove a power for good in years to come !

in Bankruptcy to take steps to remedy any abuse of patronage that might be reported in connection with official shorthand writing in Bankruptcy Courts ; (2) Arbitration in professional disputes upon custom, etc. ; (3) Successful action in support and amendment of the Libel Law Amendment Act, 1889 ; (4) Further development of a system of information and introduction, with regard to professional employment.

CHAPTER VII.

OLD AND NEW JOURNALISM—LONDON.

The newspaper is the only instrument which can drop the same thought into ten thousand minds at the same moment.—*De Tocqueville.*



COSMOPOLITANISM is the distinctive feature of the London morning Press of to-day. In each issue it places before its readers intelligence telegraphed from every capital in the globe. The news of the world is brought into competition with that of our own country, and, as a consequence, an important change has, within the present generation, come over the contents of our daily papers. Ordinary home topics which once enjoyed considerable prominence now have to be content with less space. It is true that the Parliamentary report is still an important feature, but, with exceptions, it no longer takes that leading position in the popular morning journals which it did in pre-telegraphic days. Parliament has several times deplored this, and at last has sought to secure a full record of its proceedings by means of an official report, and by installing, in 1889, a shorthand writer on the floor of the House of Lords. There was in 1877 an interesting debate on the new order of things. While in former days Parliament declined to recognize the Press, and put obstacles in the way of reporting the proceedings of the two Houses, now—that is at the time of the debate—to quote the words of the Marquis of Hartington, Parliament “came to the Press in the attitude of a suppliant, and addressed a humble prayer to the representatives of the Press that they would see whether they could not devote a little

more space to fuller reports of our debates." Since the time these words were uttered at the Newspaper Press Fund Festival, over which his Lordship presided, the tendency has certainly not been towards the lengthening of Parliamentary reports in the morning journals.

In other departments also, condensation and compression are the order of the day. If there are more leaders than heretofore, they are shorter ; and home news is either reduced to the most meagre extent or omitted altogether. In addition to the ordinary foreign cabled correspondence, the special correspondents, in times when events of world-wide importance are occurring, are readily given much space in the modern morning paper. Politician, financier, sportsman, dramatist, author, artist, all make certain demands on the space of the morning journal which cannot be refused, and it is almost out of the question to accede to these demands, except in the present recognized fashion. It is hardly to be expected or desired that the metropolitan morning Press should become very different from what it is, so far as the kind of news given is concerned. The Englishman expects that his morning newspaper shall be as solid as his morning meal. He wants, as far as possible, sound, substantial facts about public affairs with which to begin the day. *The Times* stands pre-eminently at the head of this class of newspaper, and the unusual care taken in every department of its reporting, causes its reports to be quoted with a reliance on their accuracy which is not felt with regard to the briefer accounts in other daily newspapers. Irrespective of policy, most of the morning papers of London are solid, dignified productions, dealing soberly with the facts of everyday life, and caring more for high Imperial politics than for topics of less exalted interest. Interviews only find a place when cabled from abroad. Two or three have, however, of late replaced their summary by an en-

tertaining paragraphic record of the day. Illustrations are rigorously eschewed, except in the form of occasional sketch maps. But that we may no longer be without illustrations of daily events on our breakfast tables, the *Daily Graphic* has been established, which gives a diurnal pictorial record of passing events, and is a new and spirited departure in journalism without parallel in the world.

If the morning newspapers of London are rather in the rear than in the van of newspaper progress, the same remark cannot be applied to the evening Press of the metropolis. Here innovation and diversity reign supreme. Not one of the evening newspapers has escaped the infection ; not one but has raised itself to a greater or lesser extent out of the old grooves. All would not, however, lay claim to be considered organs of the "new" journalism whose virtues and faults were aptly described by the late Matthew Arnold :—"We have had opportunities of observing a new journalism, which a clever and energetic man has lately invented. It has much to recommend it ; it is full of ability and novelty, variety, sensation, sympathy, generous instincts ; it has one great fault, that it is feather brained. It throws out ventures at a venture because it wishes them true, does not correct either them or itself, if they are false ; and to get at the state of things as they truly are, seems to feel no concern whatever."

The criticism is a true and just one ; it has not been seriously controverted, and should have a sobering effect on all enthusiastic disciples of the new school. While we have gained much with which we would not willingly part, through the efforts of those who have led in the departure from the old order of things, we have become acquainted with some undesirable additions to English journalism, and we have also lost something. We enjoy the "interview." It is deeply interesting to have from

the great actors on the world's stage an account of their own efforts from their own lips. The evening Press has given us some chapters of autobiography which are as interesting as anything in literature. We like to have, at first hand, accounts of great political or social movements from those who are laboring in them. But we could spare, without a sigh, the interview with the music hall acrobat, or the narrative of the versatile journalist who has penetrated to the comedian's dressing-room with the exalted mission of telling the world how he paints his face. Especially should we be glad to spare the return to a far from creditable phase of journalism, namely, notices of pugilism, and of the patronage which the "noble art of self-defence" receives from one exalted personage and a few aristocrats. Yet, if these things exist, the world should know it, for no evil can be removed until it be seen, in ourselves if a personal one ; or reported, if done by others. We may certainly ask the proprietors of newspapers not to report the details or "rounds" of pugilistic contests. On this subject a clergyman has well said, "The countenance which this kind of brutal business has received from one very highly placed in the country, seems to be an unfavorable omen ; but I trust in God's Providence that there will be plenty of time for the hand to get washed and sweetened, that was given to one of those vulgar champions to shake, before it comes to be kissed in homage by honest and respectable men." Personal gossip about eminent people, which occupies considerable space in several evening papers, is unobjectionable provided always that it is true and in good taste. But when the personal foibles of a man are grossly exaggerated and exposed to view with a design of bringing contumely on one who holds dissimilar views from those which the journal advocates, then the newspaper editor who permits it has degraded himself to be no better than a scandal-

monger. The growth of the new journalism makes a new code of newspaper ethics necessary. Evening journalism has completely broken through the old traditions of the English Press, but even in an age of keen competition it may be hoped that it will remain content with adopting the best features of Transatlantic journalism, while ignoring those to which less praise can be given, or which are even positively objectionable.

From the great development of original features, London evening journals of the new school have become more and more reviews of the day's events, and less and less newspapers. Articles, signed or unsigned, interviews, leaderettes, notes, descriptive writing, sketches, have to a large extent displaced the epitomized news gleaned from many sources which formerly made the evening newspaper valuable, because the reader could find in it a précis of intelligence and of reports with the "spirit" of the morning Press. The "newspaper of the future," as the evening paper is claimed to be, becomes every day less and less a newspaper and more and more a budget of comment and gossip about men and things. It would seem then that any anticipation that the evening Press will supplant the morning is not well founded, because he who would read with proper appreciation the comments of the evening journal must first have made himself acquainted with the morning paper, and, if he is to be on equal terms of information with the commentator, with all the morning papers. It is one of the defects of the new journalism that it is too prone to expose to view only those events in which it is particularly interested, and that aspect of them which is seen from the editor's standpoint. Emotion in journalism has its disadvantages as well as its advantages. A chivalrous championship of the cause of the weak is entirely praiseworthy. Constant and embittered attacks, in season and out of season, on public characters

who have transgressed an editor's political or moral code, savor of persecution. But to conclude. With its lively articles and its effective pictorial illustration, the London evening newspaper of to-day is one of the most remarkable developments of journalistic enterprise and ability of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to estimate aright its influence on public affairs and on the life of the nation, but a comparison with that exercised by the morning paper is very much in favor of the smaller though less extensively circulated evening journal.

CHAPTER VIII.

OLD AND NEW JOURNALISM—PROVINCIAL.

I suspect that just as Sir Robert Walpole always read the letter first which came from his gamekeeper, when we have a local newspaper sent to us we always read that first. It contains the details in which we are most interested.—*Earl of Rosebery.*



NOTHING has been more remarkable during the past twenty-five years of newspaper history than the improvement of the Provincial morning papers. Distance from the metropolis places them at a disadvantage, compared with the London Press, in supplying their readers with the general home and foreign news of the day. Published at the capital of the Empire, the London papers are able to collect intelligence and report proceedings at first hand, and, as many important communications are made to these newspapers exclusively, they are in an extremely favorable position for giving the news of the world. That they do this work well may be freely acknowledged, but the very disadvantages of their Provincial contemporaries are not without compensating benefits. The outlay necessary for the Provincial journal to stand on the same footing with the metropolitan paper is great; but, with the telegraphic facilities of the present day, the Provincial daily is in many instances able to supply much later and fuller news of importance than appears in the country editions of the London morning papers. One reason for this is that the local railway arrangements for the distribution of the Provincial morning journal admit of a much later going to press than is possible in London. Indeed, Provincial daily papers having private wires connecting them with the metropolis, are actually able to print important exclusive items of intelligence, or expressions of opinion, from the London dailies of the same morning, because the latter are obliged to go to press one

or two hours earlier than is necessary in the country. It is impossible for the London morning journals to reach the north, the west, or even the south of England in order to be on the breakfast table, and with the continued improvement of the Provincial dailies, it does not seem improbable that in years to come there will be a much more limited general reading of the London newspapers throughout the country than is the case at the present day.

The Provincial daily has, however, won its position at a heavy expenditure—an expenditure not only continuous but likely to increase in the future. Mr Arnot Reid, in a recent review article,⁽¹⁾ has enumerated some of the larger of these items of outlay, and his figures will give a general idea of the kind of expenditure incurred in publishing a provincial daily, which is to a large extent unknown to the London manager. But even before any money is laid out in procuring news, a London office has to be secured and manned, which is a costly undertaking. In order to promptly transmit to the Provincial office the mass of news and other contributions—much of it relating to local matters—gathered in London, it is necessary to rent a private telegraphic wire from the Post-office, the annual cost of which Mr Reid has put down at £1,000—a sum much within the mark when incidental expenses are included. A Parliamentary report will most likely be sent over the public wire, whether done by a combined staff or received from a news agency, and anyway will involve an outlay of another £1,000. It should be noted, too, that especial attention will be given in this Parliamentary report to full records of the speeches of local members of Parliament. Provincial daily newspapers give what is known as a London Letter; and, if it be a good one, the London correspondent will spend a substantial sum every year in the collection of special information; this feature Mr Reid estimates to cost

another £1,000. Lastly, the Provincial daily newspaper has to provide for the efficient reporting of local news over the area of its circulation, and the staff necessary for this in the shape of correspondents, reporters, and sub-editors is estimated at £4,000. All this expenditure may be taken to be peculiar to the country newspaper, with one exception, that of Parliamentary reporting, for which the London newspapers each maintain a staff of competent reporters.

Of course it cannot be said that metropolitan managers have not special items of expenditure which are to some extent equivalent to those enumerated. Generally speaking they spend more for foreign correspondence transmitted by telegraph, including in some cases a special wire connecting the London and Paris offices. In the matter of special correspondents, the London papers at one time had a monopoly, but provincial daily newspapers either by their own representatives, or by means of a syndicate of proprietors, are showing as great a readiness to be represented in distant parts as the London newspapers. In point of size some of the great provincial dailies appear to advantage, giving more printed matter for a penny than the London papers. The comparison therefore between London and Provincial papers is in several respects in favor of the Provincial organ. One other comparison should be mentioned, namely, the character of their contents. The distinctive feature of the two in the eyes of many readers is the London Letter. But although this *olla podrida* of diplomacy, general information, metropolitan amusements, and the frivolities of society, is more attractive than the ablest political leader ever written, the London correspondent is also able to give publicity to some valuable, exclusive political information; and, though the London morning newspapers would consider it "undignified" to copy it, the evening metropolitan journals do not scruple to transfer such an item to their columns with due acknowledgment. In political matters the Provincial daily

newspapers are better guides than their London contemporaries. London leading articles are too often merely an echo of club gossip; provincial leaders, speaking generally, acquire their value from the fact that the writers are men living and moving in the political atmosphere of the country, actively interested, probably, in its various political organizations, and knowing the views of leading statesmen better than their London brethren. Then the provincial newspaper gives the day's local news, which it is often most important for the country resident to be acquainted with, and if he knows that the Provincial morning paper will give him not only the world's news but the news of his own locality in the same sheet, he will be strongly inclined to prefer a paper issued from the nearest big town to that which comes from the metropolis.

The tendencies of the age are favorable to the Provincial Press. In matters of Government the movement is towards decentralization, which means increased importance for the country centres. With the population growing in numbers, in wealth, and in education, the daily newspaper is no longer a luxury but a necessity. While Provincial newspaper conductors supply the higher and middle classes with the morning daily papers, they have also led the way with the halfpenny evening newspapers which have of late overspread the land, and given to our artisans a daily medium of communication with the world. Nor in the general advance have the weekly Provincial papers been behindhand. Once the County weekly newspaper was synonymous with dullness, to-day it contains a budget of reading as interesting as any to be had in the ablest magazines. The best novelists of the day supply some weeklies with fiction, and every topic of home life and amusement is treated, to say nothing of numberless illustrations. To whatever department then, of Provincial journalism, attention is directed, we find a display of enterprise worthy of the best traditions of the free English Press.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TELEGRAPH AND THE PRESS.

The electric telegraph has achieved this great and paradoxical result, that it has, as it were, assembled all mankind upon one great plane where they can see everything that is done, hear everything that is said, and judge of every policy that is pursued at the very moment when those events take place. . . . It is a phenomenon to which nothing in the history of our planet up to this time presents anything that is equal or similar.—*Marquis of Salisbury.*



NO event in our political history, not even the remission of the taxes on knowledge, in the opinion of many competent judges has contributed so materially to the immense growth of the daily Press of the country as the purchase of the telegraph system by the State. Before this measure received the sanction of Parliament in 1868, the newspapers were at an extreme disadvantage in obtaining news. There was nothing like free trade between reporters and editors in sending news over the wires, because the old companies made the collection and dissemination of news a source of income, having their own staff in Parliament, and reporters elsewhere who collected news which the companies sold to provincial subscribers. It was perhaps natural, therefore, that when "liners" and others attempted to compete with the companies by also sending news over the wire, they did not get that assistance from the telegraphic authorities which was essential to success—they received what was practically an intimation that such enterprise could not be allowed to continue unless it were done under the company's auspices. When, however, the Government took over the telegraph system, this state of things was changed for the better. It was decided as a cardinal principle that the Government could not undertake the collection of news, and that this must be entirely a matter for private enterprise. What

the Department did concern itself to do, and what it has done thoroughly well ever since, has been the prompt transmission of messages under certain simple and convenient regulations, and at a cheap tariff, which has been greatly to the public advantage. For though newspaper proprietors primarily enjoy the benefit of the low charges, it cannot be said that they are pecuniary gainers from this circumstance; on the contrary they give the public to the fullest extent the advantages which arise from cheap telegraphy.

Free telegraphy led to the birth of the news agencies for the collection and distribution of home intelligence; but before this period private enterprise had established an agency for the collection of foreign news for use by the English newspapers which deserves priority of notice. In 1858 the famous Reuter's Agency was founded by a Prussian named Julius Reuter, who, as a courier to several of the European Courts, had a good knowledge of foreign capitals, and of the sources from which information of importance to this country could be gathered abroad. The familiar words "Reuter's Telegram" at the head of a foreign message are a guarantee of the absolute credibility of the news. Ramifications of the Agency are world-wide, and in 1864 it was formed into a Limited Company. Of the agencies which came into existence after 1868, the most important is the Press Association, which may be called the child of the Provincial Newspaper Society. The Association has the largest corps of reporters and correspondents in the country. Its reporters are to be found in Parliament, in the Law Courts, and at all the great political gatherings and conferences of various descriptions, as well as at all important sporting occurrences. The Association sends out telegraphic reports of varying length to suit the requirements of different classes of newspapers—from a verbatim report, or a column condensation, to half-a-dozen lines of summary. With the

aid of an army of correspondents, general news from every part of the country is supplied to the papers. The Press Association is a Company in which the shares are exclusively held by newspaper proprietors. It is managed by a body of directors elected from the shareholders, and the manager is Mr E. Robbins. The Association owes much of its present stability and success to the indefatigable efforts of its first secretary, the late Mr John Lovell. The Central News, founded by Mr William Saunders, and for some years conducted by him, is at present a Limited Company, with Mr J. Moore as secretary. It works on lines similar to the other Association, but has, in addition, foreign correspondents at most of the capitals of the world, and sends out a service of foreign telegrams to English newspapers. Both agencies are conducted with praiseworthy energy and ability; and the strictest impartiality and absence of partisan bias is the characteristic of the intelligence they transmit to almost every newspaper in the kingdom. The youngest News Agency is the Exchange Telegraph Company, established about 1875. Designed originally for the supply of Stock Exchange quotations by means of the "tape" printing machines, the operations of the Company have been extended, and it now sends out home and foreign intelligence, which the "tape" machines print off in the office of the London subscribers. In combination with some provincial morning papers special correspondents are also accredited at home and abroad. Mr W. H. Davies is the manager of this Company.

An idea of the enormous development of Press telegraphy may be gathered from the following facts. When the Government took over the telegraphs, there were 168 newspapers only which received a limited supply of news from the old companies; in 1885, 578 newspapers had telegraphic services from the News Associations. These services, it may be explained, consist of a certain

amount of intelligence despatched at particular times to suit the convenience of various classes of newspapers. For daily papers messages will be transmitted at intervals from six o'clock at night till six o'clock in the morning, while the evening newspaper supply extends from six o'clock in the morning till six in the evening. Weekly newspapers are accommodated with a supply suited to their requirements on the day of going to press only. In the year 1871 there were 21,000,000 words of Press messages sent over the wires. In 1886 the number of words telegraphed to newspapers was 578,382,655! But, in addition to this enormous total, thirty private wires are rented from the Government by morning newspapers for transmitting news by night, and it is estimated that over each of these about six columns of matter for newspapers is sent every night.

The arrangements made in the present day by the Post Office for the transmission of newspaper messages on all important occasions are of a very complete and comprehensive character. Whenever a great statesman visits a place with his attendant train of newspaper reporters, the Post Office sends to the nearest telegraph office an experienced superintendent telegraph officer, with a picked staff of operators and, if need be, special instruments. Within a few minutes of the close of a speech, every word of it will have been sent over the wires to a far-distant town. Such a feat would have been deemed a miracle in the days when Dickens rode post-haste through the country, transcribing by the dim light of a candle as the carriage careered along, and doing his best to outstrip a rival reporter in the race to London. But still more wonderful than even the extension of home telegraphy, is the development of the telegraphic system all over the world, so that what is said and done in any part of the globe is known a few hours later in every civilized community, however distant from the scene of action.

CHAPTER X.

EDITORS AND LEADING ARTICLES.

The true Church of England at this moment, lies in the editors of its newspapers. These preach to the people weekly, daily; admonishing Kings themselves; advising peace or war, with an authority which only the first Reformers and a long-past class of Popes were possessed of; inflicting moral censure; imparting moral encouragement, consolation, edification.—*Carlyle*.



THOUGH it is generally and rightly understood that the editor is the supreme authority who presides over the policy of a newspaper, yet some curious misconceptions exist, even among fairly intelligent people, as to his functions. It is, for example, popularly believed that the editor performs the super-human feat of daily writing all the leading articles and editorial matter which appear in the columns of his newspaper. This and other misunderstandings as to what an editor does or does not do, are not altogether to be wondered at when two things are taken into account. The anonymous character of English journalism has made the editor the only known exponent, so far as the public is aware, of the views of the newspaper. Further, the public has been disposed to interpret in a too literal and limited sense the utterances of great writers relative to the editors of our newspapers. In endeavoring to correct a mistaken view of editorial duties, it is by no means sought to detract from the editorial dignity, for the vocation of editor, as it may be truly described in reference at least to the majority of the daily papers of the land, is something much more remarkable and dignified than the popular estimate. The editor may be not inaptly likened to a *chef d'orchestre*, the difference being that while the musical leader conducts a visible orchestra, the journal-

istic leader conducts an invisible one. We can, even when listening to a concerted performance, distinguish the tones of individual musicians, but we cannot when we read an English newspaper—unless we are unusually well informed—attribute any particular article to its author or authors. This arises from the fact that the articles are anonymous and written in strict conformity to the policy of the newspaper, that policy being inspired by the editor. He alone receives the praise or censure for the acceptability or non-acceptability of the views expressed; he alone is affected by the success or failure of the policy propounded.

It will be acknowledged then how responsible is the position of the editor of an important organ of public opinion. His function is not to write leading articles or critiques himself—this work must in general fall to other hands—but to carefully study the political and other movements of the hour, so instructing his corps of writers that public opinion may be correctly led, and so ordering the efforts of his staff of correspondents that trustworthy criticism and information bearing on current topics is supplied through the columns of his newspaper. How great the influence which duties such as these confer can hardly be overrated. Some indeed may, and in fact, do, decry the editorial power, and assert that the familiar “we” represents but the opinions of one man. From the necessity of things any expressed opinions must have an individual exponent, but it must be remembered that the majority of newspapers owe their success to the ability with which the editor represents the views of his constituents. If a daily newspaper had a circulation of *one*, no man would trouble about the opinions expressed in it. The fact that many thousands purchase and support a newspaper because they consider that it represents their views, renders newspaper opinion all-powerful. There

are, however, limits even to the power wielded by the user of the talismanic "we." The editor's articles may retard but cannot stop the progress of a good cause, or hinder the efforts of a good government. But woe to the statesman or official whom the newspaper justly arraigns! If he has not a good defence to offer to the charges preferred against him, then the publicity given to his misdeeds will cause his overthrow. For, as Carlyle so eloquently remarks, the modern editor admonishes even Kings, and wields a power which only the early Reformers possessed.

The leading article, through which the editor exercises his power, was evolved out of the summary, and is a growth of nineteenth-century journalism, for there was nothing of the kind in the newspapers which saw the light in the first years of the century. In this development the *Times* led the way, though, for a long period after that journal was established, it contained nothing more nearly approaching a leader than a composition, chiefly consisting of a summary of current news, printed on the inside pages of the paper. The introduction of the leading article is attributed to the second John Walter, whose control of the *Times* extended from 1812 to 1847. Originally the leading article was known as the "leaded article." For the benefit of those not conversant with printing matters, it may be explained that type is said to be "leaded" when thin slips of metal (leads) are placed between the lines of letters, thus making a greater space between the lines of printed matter than is observable in ordinary print—a very common device for giving distinction to particular communications in a newspaper. It must be admitted, however, that this is a somewhat prosaic account of the origin of such an expressive term as "leader." Newspaper writers generally will much prefer the late Dean Stanley's noble definition. "What a word 'leader' is,"

remarks the Dean, "if we really dive into its meaning. It reminds me of the speech of the young English king who, when this nation found itself for a moment without a leader, came forward and said, 'I will be your leader.' I do not say that the leaders in our great journals really rise to the height of this position; but still they claim it, and it is their position if they would rightly fill it."

It will not be without interest to contrast the high opinion which Dean Stanley had of the leading article with the singularly low estimate of the value and importance of such productions entertained by Richard Cobden. Referring to the many articles which in his own recollection had moved and stirred the heart of England, the Dean asks, in the same speech from which quotation has been already made, "if we cannot recall here and there in the midst of some great national crisis, words which have come home to those whom no sermon could ever reach, and yet which those who write sermons feel they might imitate as their best and noblest models?" On more than one occasion Mr Cobden expressed the opinion in the House of Commons and elsewhere that it was the mission of the newspaper to give news without comment of its own. "Mr Cobden's opinion was," we are told by Mr James Grant, "that the great bulk of the people did not care for long leading articles, which he regarded as nothing better than dull disquisitions, or elaborate and heavy essays." When the *Star* was established as the organ of the Free Trade party, Cobden endeavored to get the committee of management to carry out his views and to have, instead of three or four articles, one only of the character of a general summary. But it was discovered that this limitation of leading matter was not appreciated by the public. It is also of interest to mention in this connection that Mr John Bright did not hold his colleague's views, but was a frequent contributor of leading and other articles to at

least one organ of the Anti-Corn Law League. The truth is, that the public is interested to see the attitude of a newspaper on the speeches or facts recorded in its columns, and there is no doubt that the perusal and criticism of the articles is one of the great pleasures of newspaper reading.

One important question remains. Should newspaper articles be anonymous or signed? This is undoubtedly more a writer's than a reader's question. It is one which concerns the journalist more than the public. Without going into the arguments for and against anonymity, it may be stated that the majority of eminent journalists are, for practical reasons, against signed articles, and probably the great body of pressmen would endorse the views of Mr Edward R. Russell, of Liverpool, quoted in the *New Review*. He holds that the signing of articles would develop rather than repress the egotism of the staff.

A newspaper, he says, should have an individuality, a "record," a continuity, a policy, and even a manner, independent of the *personnel*, and it should be the business of the editor to keep these up. In the leading columns, writers should have no personal equation to consider. They would not—or should not—accept the task of writing articles contrary to their serious convictions. But if they do write leaders, they should have nothing to think of but their subject, their instructions, and the recognized policy of the paper. And any good editor will so revise his writers' articles that any obtrusion of themselves upon the scene may be retrenched.

Though leading articles have occasionally been re-published in a permanent form, they are, generally speaking, distinctly not literature, and have but an ephemeral value. It could, indeed, hardly be otherwise. The journalist is called upon to furnish the public with a vigorous off-hand expression of opinion about the subject of the hour as it presents itself at the moment of writing. A clear, frank, and rapid declaration of the views of the paper is expected from him; he emphatically wields the pen of a "ready writer," and a completed article is looked for from him in

a space of time which would astonish the uninitiated. But if the journalist cannot hope that his voluminous writings will, any of them, possess an enduring interest, what inspires him in his labors? It is that he is exercising the great prerogative of freedom of speech; that in many instances he speaks to the world long before statesmen or divines on the questions of the hour; and that he is, by his daily efforts, helping to form the public opinion of the nation.

CHAPTER XI.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

The special correspondent seems to be forced to combine in himself the power of a first-rate steeple-chaser with the powers of the most brilliant writer—the most wonderful physical endurance with the most remarkable mental vigor.—*Marquis of Salisbury.*



NEWSPAPERS have from the first been greatly indebted to their correspondents for the variety, scope, and importance of the intelligence contained in their columns. Long before such correspondents had a recognized status, the English journals which led the Press in the early part of the eighteenth century, either through interest or favor kept their readers posted in Continental politics by means of extracts of public interest from letters received from abroad. With the growth of the Press, the practice developed, and correspondents were regularly retained, so that now-a-days a newspaper gains a character for enterprise or want of enterprise, just in proportion to the number and ability of its staff of home and foreign correspondents. The great newspapers, not of England alone but of all the world, have now their correspondents in every land, and nothing, even in the most remote corners of the earth, escapes their observation. The correspondent of a newspaper wields an immense power, which, exercised aright, is a potent engine for the good of humanity. To describe the great actors of the world and their work, is not the correspondent's only, or his most important, duty. He proclaims, through the Press, in a voice that is heard in the remote country village as clearly as in the crowded city, the misdoings of the tyrant and the deceits of the charlatan. "At the very name of the Press," remarks Mr James

Grant, "tyrants tremble. It is the thing which, of all others, despots dread. In every country and clime they stand in awe of the Press."

In attempting a description of correspondents of various kinds, the chief to claim attention are those designated by the epithet "special." The duties of a "special correspondent" are well indicated in the adjective used. On the outbreak of a war, the tidings of a terrible catastrophe, or the occurrence of some national festivity, the representative of the newspaper who is sent to the scene of action is termed a special correspondent. His duties are to deal with the especial event in hand, and he in no way supersedes or interferes with "our own correspondent," should the paper have a resident representative at or near the spot. There are several varieties of the "special," two of which may be explained before the third and most arduous is considered. For a very long time the "traveling correspondent" has been a favorite functionary with newspaper conductors, and there are probably few journalists on large papers, from the editor downwards, who have not, at some period or other, filled this pleasant position. While "special correspondents," like Mr H. M. Stanley for example, have added much to geographical knowledge during the last quarter of a century, the "traveling correspondent" is in many cases merely the journalist on a holiday trip, combining business and pleasure by describing the places and people he visits. Contributions of this kind are, from the nature of things, of very unequal merit, and the insular prejudices and prepossessions of the average Britisher are often apt to be a little too strongly manifested when relating his foreign experiences. Cosmopolitans such as Mr George Augustus Sala, have, however, given to the newspaper readers of England narratives of travel which have since found a worthy place in our literature. The "special commis-

sioner" is a man with a mission. He is commissioned by his editor to pursue some special line of inquiry on a matter of public moment, such as the working of some new legislative enactment ; the condition of a particular class in the community ; or, it may be, the investigation of some imposture. Usually a well-informed writer, the commissioner describes attractively what he sees, and gains access to, and is able to publish, information not already in the possession of the public. In most cases, if not in all, the commissioner looks, however, at what he sees very much from the standpoint of his newspaper's politics, and a word of warning may therefore be given here in relation to this class of contributions to the Press, namely, that the newspaper reader will remember that there are at least two standpoints from which every question can be viewed. But in justice to the Press, let it be added that correspondents of this description are sometimes quite unfettered with instructions, and always act more or less on their own initiative. Above all it must not be forgotten that in the ranks of correspondents of the class just mentioned have been men who have done valuable service to humanity in bringing before the public conscience the cause of the weak or oppressed, whether in the London slum, in the remote Bulgarian hamlet, or in the inaccessible wilds of Africa. The world is happier to-day, as well as wiser, for the efforts of men like Mr G. R. Sims, the author of "How the Poor Live ;" the late Mr J. McGahan, of the *Daily News*, the "Liberator of Bulgaria ;" and Mr H. M. Stanley, the African explorer.

War correspondents form, happily, a class of journalists who are not at all times employed in their hazardous and intensely exciting, but what Mr W. T. Stead calls, "one of the most soul-deadening occupations in the whole range of journalism." This department of special correspondence dates, as is very generally known, from the time

of the Crimean war. Dr William Howard Russell rendered the nation and the army no insignificant services in the capacity of war correspondent of *The Times*. What he did then is a matter of national history, but here it may be stated that Dr Russell is *doyen* of that body of brave adventurous men who at the risk of life and health, have been on every field of battle since the Alma, and have noted who conquered and who fell in, alas, too many "glorious victories." Another representative name in association with war correspondents is that of Mr Archibald Forbes who introduced, as a representative of the *Daily News*, the modern style of telegraphic war correspondence. Early in his career he was commissioned to telegraph not merely short messages recording victories, but the whole of his descriptive articles, hitherto forwarded to the journal at home by post. Since this time the newspapers of the country have spent enormous sums in the telegraphic transmission of the war correspondents' despatches. By this means the reading public are kept *au courant* with everything occurring at the seat of war. The presence of special correspondents in camp with instantaneous means of communication with the outer world ready to their hand, and daily, if not hourly, used, constitutes, of course, a grave source of danger from a military point of view. But while our army authorities have not been able to banish the war correspondent from the camp, they have set up a pretty rigorous censorship over correspondents and their despatches, designed to prevent publicity being given to anything prejudicial to the interests of the force. The rôle of the war correspondent is beset by many difficulties and trials. He has more "moving accidents by flood and field" than ever Othello experienced, and if he escapes with life and health, may account himself fortunate.

Mr Forbes in one of his early lectures, gave a graphic

picture of the ideal of a war correspondent, a profession which, as he aptly put it, is one of the oldest in the world. "The ideal war correspondent" observes Mr Forbes, "should have the gift of tongues, should be conversant with all European languages, most of the Asiatic languages, and some of the dialects of the Pacific Islands. In my own case I did not know any foreign language at all, and had to make my way with bad German, rudimentary French, some scraps of Spanish, and about one hundred words of Hindustani. I also fall short of the ideal in being so nervous under fire that I am compelled to steady myself by taking notes industriously. A paragon correspondent should be able to ride one hundred miles at a stretch, never to know any slight sinking, and be able at the end of the journey, however arduous and sleepless it may have been, to write in a fair round hand for the telegraph clerk at the rate of a column per hour; after which it is his duty to return to the scene of action without a moment's delay. In these requirements I think I came pretty well up to the ideal. I could ride one hundred miles, go without food for two days, and longer if I could eke it out with a little brandy. I got so tired occasionally that I had to go on nearer dead than alive." Mr Forbes, by general consent, was nearer his own ideal when attendant on "grim-visaged war" than he is willing to confess. Fortunately for the world our war correspondents are at the present time more peacefully employed than in their dreadful occupation of describing human carnage. They may, it is true, be seen taking part in campaigns, but they are bloodless political campaigns, in which our statesmen endeavor to convince, not to slaughter.

The special correspondence in the newspapers, whatever its theme, will ever remain one of the most pleasing features of the Press. The particular charms of special correspondence may be enumerated as novelty, freshness,

constant variety, and last, but by no means least, a pleasing egotism. Contributions of special correspondents would lose more than half their attractiveness if not written in the first person singular. How tamely the narrative of "How I found Livingstone" would read if described in an impersonal fashion ! The "I" of the special correspondent is as necessary to him as the "we" to the editor. Anecdotes which might be thought irrelevant, acquire a new piquancy ; and facts of no great moment become important, when associated with the personality of the correspondent by the magic of the first person singular.

CHAPTER XII.

"OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT."

Everything goes into the newspapers. In other countries matters of a public nature may be seen in them ; here, in addition, you see perpetually even the concerns of individuals.—*Rush (U. S. Minister to London), 1818.*

DICKENS once observed of the London correspondent that he was a gentleman who knew nothing, but who professed to know everything. The satire may have been deserved at the time, but it certainly is not applicable now, when it would be difficult to discover anything about which the London correspondent does not obtain some authentic information, whether it be the designs of Ministers of State, the latest frivolity of fashionable society, or the goings or doings of anyone of importance. The London correspondent came prominently before the world when provincial daily newspapers began to be a power in the land ; and his original function then, as now, was to supply the people in the country with such information as should keep them as well-informed about the daily life of the metropolis as residents in the capital itself. Not only has the London correspondent fully answered expectations in this respect, but he now spreads his net very wide, and gives his readers every day the latest gossip about high life, the talk of the lobby when Parliament is sitting, the conversation of the clubs all the year round, tittle-tattle from the studio and green room, and, alas that it should be so, much that is quite personal and sometimes possibly a little scandalous about the lives of well-known personages. There is nothing which escapes that versatile *flaneur*, the London correspondent.

Dealing with matters of such varied interest, it is not a

matter of surprise that London letters are widely divergent in character and quality, and, like many other departments of press industry, owe much to the enterprise and ability of the particular London correspondent who is responsible for them. There are many kinds of London correspondents. The representatives of the great provincial morning newspapers may be described first, because both in seniority and merit they take the precedence in this branch of journalistic work. The London correspondents of a dozen morning newspapers that could be named are men of much experience, of energy and ability, whose daily contribution to their newspaper of from a column to two columns comprises information, specially acquired, at no little expense and labor. When Parliament is sitting, the London correspondent is a regular attendant in the Lobby and in the Gallery of the House of Commons. Have the local members any items of information likely to be interesting to their constituents? The London correspondent will, after a short conversation with the member, relate what the hon. gentleman desires to be made known in the most effective way in the London letter. Is the debate of unusual interest? The London correspondent betakes himself to the Gallery, and gives a descriptive sketch of it in his letter. In Sell's "The World's Press" for 1890 the London correspondent in the Gallery and his work is thus succinctly described by Mr Bernard F. Bussy :—

Another person in the Gallery whose work should be mentioned, as it differs in some respects from that of most Gallery men, is the "London Correspondent." Every important daily provincial paper has its London correspondent, whose work, in many cases, is confined to sending to his paper by telegraph each evening a column or more of mingled news, comment, criticism, political gossip, and so on; but who, in some cases, has also to attend the proceedings of Parliament, and to write a description of such incidents, speeches, and scenes as come under his notice in the House. This is a comparatively modern journalistic development, but its growth seems to be extending, and there are at least a dozen members of the Gallery who are employed in this way.

In some mysterious manner the London correspondent becomes aware of the doings of Mayfair, and much that society is interested to hear about, first finds its way into print through the letter of the ubiquitous London correspondent. If any new commercial undertaking is contemplated, he will give an early intimation before anything has been said about it in the columns devoted to monetary news. On ecclesiastical no less than on legal affairs he should be *au fait* in all that agitates the Churches, and able to chronicle the whisperings of the Law Courts. To make his letter complete he must have an ear for music and an eye for pictures, and be able to make the newest announcements on matters operatic and artistic. Capability to collect information so varied can hardly be expected of one man, nor is it found even in the most versatile of London correspondents. He knows, however, when and where to get the information he desires, and contributors here and there help him in his work. Such assistance entails, of course, expense, and the expenditure on a first-class London letter is not an inconsiderable item. Like much else in the paper, London correspondence has a definite political color, and papers representing opposite opinions in politics will, through their correspondents, give very different estimates of a political crisis or of the character of a particular Minister.

Unlike some other departments of journalism, the vocation of a London correspondent does not confer on the journalist who fills it any particular personal distinction, and to the public generally, very few of them are known even by name. Perhaps the best known London correspondent is Mr Henry W. Lucy, late editor of the *Daily News*, who is probably the most voluminous, able, and successful writer of London letters for the daily and weekly provincial Press in practice. There are two or three Associations which purvey London letters to morning

newspapers in the country, but the matter sent out by such enterprises is, speaking generally, deficient in color and point. This arises in a great measure probably from the fact that a London letter written to suit the requirements of a number of papers, cannot have that definite and especial interest to the readers of a particular daily journal which it is the business of "our London correspondent" to impart. This remark does not apply to quite the same extent with respect to the London correspondence of weekly newspapers. In these journals the letter has to descant, to some extent, on the events of the week, brightened with personal reminiscences and anecdotes; and so long as it is light and pleasing the reader is content. Of London letters for the smaller weeklies there are all varieties, many indifferent and some absolutely bad. A Munchausen-like faculty for romancing is often shown, which takes the form possibly of confidential information about the Queen and Royal Family, imparted personally to the correspondent by these exalted personages, the veracity, or want of veracity, of which deceives no one. Some are dull epitomes of week-old news. But such letters make up for lack of quality by a plentiful use of the first person singular, which, by the way, has almost disappeared from many of the best London letters contributed to the daily Press.

Imitation is said to be the sincerest form of flattery, and, if this be true, the London correspondent ought to feel highly flattered, for the tendency of the times among the London newspapers is to adopt a modification of the London letter which originated with the provincial Press, and up to a recent date was its distinctive feature. Some of the London penny morning dailies have now seen the advisability of giving under a heading from two to three columns of large type matter, combining a summary of much of the day's news with a good many items of

special interest, which under the old *régime*, if noticed at all, instead of being related in crisp paragraphs would have been embedded in a woolly leading article a column long. The morning metropolitan papers have taken to imitate the London correspondent's work under some such heading as "London Day by Day," or "This Day's News." In the London evening papers the paragraphs are more gossipy than in the morning journals, and have as their title "Tittle-Tattle," "About Men and Things," "Miscellanea," etc. It was the London correspondent who popularized the paragraphic style of journalism, and lead the way for the society papers, and to-day he finds both the metropolitan and provincial Press vying with each other in mirroring every morning all those incidents which go to make up London life at the close of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SUB-EDITOR.

By wind or stream, on horseback or dromedary back, in the pouch of the Indian runner, or clicking over the magnetic wires, troop (to him) all the famous performers from the four quarters of the globe.—*J. R. Lowell.*



OUTSIDE the newspaper staff there is but little knowledge of the office and duties of the Sub-Editor. The name fails to convey an idea of the functions of the "Sub"—as he is familiarly known in newspaper circles. It would tend possibly to give the public a more adequate idea of the duties appertaining to the office if he were to be called, as in America, "the News-Editor." People are fully alive to the fact that the editor exercises full control over the opinions and policy of the newspaper, but they do not so well understand that all the news passes through the hands of an accomplished corps of sub-editors before it meets the public eye, and that were this not the case, the appearance of the news columns of the paper would be a cause for considerable amazement—not to say amusement—to the intelligent newspaper reader.

Perhaps the most entertaining way in which an idea of the sub-editorial functions can be conveyed, is to furnish a sketch of the sub-editor at work. His duties vary very little, whether he is engaged on a London or Provincial morning newspaper, except that the provincial sub-editor has, as a rule, a great deal more work than the London sub-editor. In the London office the chief sub-editor has a staff about him. To each member of this staff, he allots the contributions which reach him, the assistants taking individually distinct departments of news, and there is

generally a larger staff and better organization than exists in the provincial newspaper office ; but as the work in the country is more diversified and arduous it may be taken for description by preference.

Let us accompany a sub-editor in his night's work in one of the large provincial newspaper offices. For the sake of the illustration, we will assume that our typical sub-editor for this night only does all the sub-editorial work, though this it will be understood would be a physical impossibility, and a staff of sub-editors, more or less adequate to the work, performs the task which we have allotted to one.

We enter the office then with our friend the night sub-editor somewhat early in the evening, say about seven o'clock, or at any rate sometime before the printers arrive for their night's work. Our sub-editor at once takes his seat at his desk, which is lighted by a gas lamp with an immense green shade giving an uncanny appearance to the apartment.

As we watch at our sub-editorial friend's elbow, we are confirmed in the belief that there is some magnetic power of attraction about him. A few scattered sheets of manuscript, a few letters, and some stray telegrams litter the desk when he takes his seat. These have perhaps been left by the day sub-editor on going off duty. Whether this is so or not, a hasty survey shows which are of any importance for the work our friend has in hand ; and those which are not speedily find their way to the waste paper basket, while the sub-editor is adjusting his spectacles, getting out his scissors, and putting a point to his blue pencil. Now we begin to notice his magnetic influence ; all the news of the world seems to be attracted to him. A shoal of large envelopes, containing all sorts of copy, flutters down on his desk from the nearest railway stations, and, before he has opened them, a steady shower of telegraphic messages has set in, the familiar buff envelopes fol-

lowing each other with a quickness which is bewildering. Then comes a procession of reporters attached to the newspaper, who one after another place their day's work on the sub-editor's desk; and from an adjoining office arrive sheaves of news telegraphed direct to the editorial rooms from the London office in Fleet Street. And then — but our friend has not waited for all this reading matter to accumulate before making a commencement. With a readiness of eye and hand acquired by constant practice, the sub-editor has sorted all these various contributions. Some of the matter requires little or no attention from him, such as the sporting news sent by telegraph, the markets, and certain descriptions of monetary news. All this is gladly passed on by him to the compositors who have a special experience with this class of matter. The "copy" of the senior reporters of the staff too, provided that it is of the required length, does not need the serious attention of the sub-editor.

But here is a verbatim speech of Mr Gladstone, arriving in instalments from the telegraph office, which the newspaper is receiving in common with a number of other papers from a News Agency at a specific contract sum, inclusive of cost of reporting and telegraphing. This telegraphic report requires the careful attention of the sub-editor, and a considerable use of his blue pencil for the revision and correction of errors made in passing over the telegraph wires. The telegram is written on that thin paper called "flimsy," used for making several copies at the same time by means of oiled carbonic paper. The mass of telegrams emits a powerful and unpleasant smell, due to the oil and lamp black freely used in the manufacture of what are known to press men as "blacks." In a short time the fingers of the sub-editor more nearly resemble those of a chimney sweep than of a literary man. In the course of the night other "flimsy" sheets reach the

sub-editor's desk—long verbose descriptions of ordinary events from gentlemen who expect to be paid for their contributions according to the number of lines printed. When the sub-editor takes these items of news in hand, he probably thinks, with Mr James Grant, that the work of cutting down "flimsy" of this description is "the hardest and most disagreeable duty" of the sub-editor.

His labors are not confined to home news. Foreign telegrams from various sources reach him which will give him a great amount of trouble. Unfamiliar foreign names have been transmitted, and have come through the telegraph office in a manner barely intelligible ; these have to be corrected ; the news sent is brief, and to render it interesting to English readers, it is in some cases necessary to supplement it with other information. All news which reaches the sub-editor has to be submitted to careful scrutiny. He reduces to half or one-third of its dimensions some prolix report, gives due prominence to an important item of news by means of a proper heading, and excludes what is absolutely erroneous, undesirable to be published, or libelous. From time to time he despatches, by means of either mechanical or pneumatic apparatus, batches of prepared "copy" to the "case room," an apartment in which from fifty to sixty printers are engaged the whole night long in putting advertisements and news into type. Thus the work goes on, varied by occasional researches in books of reference or pigeon holes for facts with which to amplify or illustrate the news which is passing through the sub-editor's hands. There seems to be no end to the stream of news, but at last we have reached the small hours of the morning. The reporters have done their work and gone away, and the messengers from the railway stations and the telegraph boys come no more.

The bulk of the news having been dealt with, new sources of anxiety arise. The foreman of the printers finds that

the advertisements exceed the space allotted for them, and a good many additional items of news have turned up unexpectedly. Proofs are produced, and a hurried consultation takes place. This piece of intelligence can be held back till a later edition, when something else can be removed to make room for it; that article, filling a column, may stand over for another day without losing its freshness; this report, to which the reporter and sub-editor have devoted a great amount of labor, must be sacrificed, and a paragraph is all that sees the light of an interesting half-column report. The foreman's mind is relieved, and the sub-editor having given the finishing touch to a batch of late news, home and foreign, the first edition of the morning newspaper is put to press at about four o'clock in the morning.

Not even the editorial position in point of labor and responsibility is above that of the sub-editor, or news-editor, in importance. It is the sub-editor who arranges various items of news, and it is news primarily that the public look for in the paper. The acme of perfection in modern journalism, as far as the compilation of news is concerned, has been well put by a Philadelphia journalist. "The coming editor," remarks Colonel A. K. McClure "is the man who can take the scissors and paste and tell the world better in a quarter of a column what another editor would tell in a column or more."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE REPORTER.

All speakers can imagine what must be the labor of putting together our ungrammatical sentences, and filling up from conjecture the unknown name of some unheard of author, who has unfortunately been quoted in the midst of a speech on modern topics.—*Dean Stanley.*



REPORTERS for the Press have been termed contemporary historians, and no description could more aptly designate their functions. They are the successors of the earlier annalists to whom history owes nearly everything which is known of many periods of national life. But how different are the characteristics and methods of the modern race of reporters compared with those of the monkish chroniclers of old, or even with the news-letter writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A bold flight of imagination is necessary if we would picture to ourselves the nineteenth century reporter doing his work in the monastic scriptorium, or writing in a garret in Grub-street. We can imagine that he would be sadly out of his element in the scriptorium with its reverent surroundings, for it cannot be said that the bustle and excitement which accompany the everyday work of the modern reporter would be calculated to fit him for the quiet leisurely work of the ancient chronicler. Our modern reporter would no doubt greatly enjoy the gossiping ways of the letter-writers and their visits to coffee-taverns and clubs, but he would regard with righteous indignation a proposition that he should inhabit a garret or undergo any of the privations which men who followed the literary calling had once to endure. Happily in our own time the Press of England, which is the hand-maid of

literature, has shared with her the greater prosperity of the nineteenth century, and from the floor of the House of Lords to the tiniest Vestry, the reporter of to-day is an honored and welcome visitant whenever deliberations of public importance are in progress. Much has been written about the reporter's vocation from every point of view, and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to say anything new on a department of journalistic enterprise which has been so voluminously treated. In his daily work the reporter of to-day is brought into contact with every phase of modern life, whether political or personal, whether dealing with our amusements or our sorrows. In the morning he may be investigating the details of some revolting tragedy, at night he may be sitting in judgment at the theatre on the latest farcical piece. Broadly speaking, however, his work may be grouped into three divisions, namely, shorthand writing ; condensation ; and description—it is in one or other of these directions that he is called upon to exercise his abilities.

Few, probably, however ignorant of Press work, in the present day hold the belief that ability to write shorthand forms a reporter's only necessary qualification. Yet possibly a word of warning may be still necessary to the tyro, and it cannot be better conveyed than by quoting two sentences from Mr Thomas Allen Reed. "It is of very little use," he says, "to take shorthand notes if you don't know what to do with them when taken. They are, after all, but the raw material—necessary indeed to the manufactured article, but not the article itself."⁽¹⁾ The introduction and growth of the practice of shorthand writing by reporters of the Press would form an interesting subject of inquiry, though only a few words can be devoted to it here, before passing on to consider the practical uses of shorthand to the reporter. The art has been practised by

1. "Reporter's Guide," 2nd edition, page 33.

the newspaper reporter ever since the organization of a corps of shorthand writers by Mr James Perry, of the *Morning Chronicle*, a little more than a century ago, to report the proceedings of Parliament. For at least fifty years afterwards, the adoption of shorthand by the reporters of the Press throughout the country was slow, especially on the provincial newspapers. In the early days of several old pressmen now living, a shorthand reporter was a *rara avis*; but Phonography has wrought a great change, and to-day Mr Pitman's system is practically in universal use in the newspaper offices of the land. The everyday practice of shorthand by reporters has become such a familiar thing that its great importance is hardly valued as it should be. It gives the reporter another sense, as it were, and enormously increases his usefulness. In the reporting of speeches shorthand is, of course, indispensable, but its great value also arises from the facility it gives the reporter to jot down, with lightning-like rapidity, heads of conversation and items of information of various descriptions, collected from divers sources, to be afterwards converted into paragraphs or articles. Material of all descriptions may, by means of shorthand, be stored up in the reporter's note-book, for use in the next issue or his newspaper, with the minimum of trouble and the least possible expenditure of time. Shorthand is, indeed, the beneficent genius summoned to the reporter's assistance twenty times a day in the course of his labors, and if we ask his name, in ninety-five cases out of a hundred, it will be Pitman's Phonography.

Next to ability as a shorthand writer, the reporter is, or should be, an adept at condensation. To the uninitiated, no doubt, the successful epitomizing of speeches by the skilled reporter may appear to be mere child's play, but the faculty is only acquired by pressmen after much observation and practice, and the exercise of whatever

ability, natural or acquired, they may possess. To supply a half-column report of a speech which would take six times as much space if reproduced fully, will test the powers of discrimination of the reporter to the utmost, and will call into play all the knowledge he possesses of the subject with which the speaker has to deal, in order that he may give prominence to those passages which are of the greatest public interest. The exigencies of journalism do not admit of the reporter taking a verbatim note of the majority of the speeches to which he listens, and afterwards quietly sitting down, steadily going through his "note," deliberately making a selection of those passages which are most important, and weaving them into one harmonious whole. When the reporter is called upon to prepare a condensed report, he endeavors to take just as many notes as are needful for his purpose. To produce a condensed report successfully under these circumstances, his observant and critical faculties must be constantly exercised throughout the proceedings he is reporting. He must be prompt to seize upon the "points" made by the speaker, must describe his chief arguments, and give to the public the orator's main conclusions; and such a report has to be handed in at his office for the printers within a very brief time of the close of the meeting. Speaking generally, it may be truly said that our reporters condense with success, and that the public owe much to the epitomized form in which statements of general import are presented to them. Complaints of public speakers on the score of inefficient condensation are few and far between, when they are reported by competent men; indeed the reporter is not always to blame, for it sometimes happens that the sub-editor is compelled, owing to exigencies of space, to reduce, in a somewhat rough-and-ready fashion, some well-digested summary of a speech—to the dismay of the pains-taking

reporter. After all, the use of the pruning knife is unavoidable, for it is a case of half a loaf being better than no bread.

Of the descriptive writing which falls to the lot of the reporter much has been written already, and many pages would be required to give anything like a complete account of it. It must suffice to say that an acquaintance with a multifarious variety of subjects is needed, if he would describe to the advantage of the readers of his newspaper the events in which they are interested, whether these events be exhibitions of works of art, experiments with new inventions, or a butter-making competition. A journalist of wide experience once observed to the writer, "You will find in the course of your Press experience, that any knowledge, however slight, you may acquire on any imaginable subject will, at some time or another, prove of use to you when engaged as a reporter." Every day experience illustrates the truth of the remark.

CHAPTER XV.

THE REPORTER AT WORK.

No dangers affright him and no labors tire.—*Anon.*



ARIETY is the distinguishing characteristic of the reporter's vocation. It is a rare thing for him to be engaged for any length of time on one subject. This undoubtedly gives to reporting a certain fascination with juvenile aspirants for journalistic honors. In a somewhat prosaic age it must be admitted that—in this respect at least—the knight of the note-book has some advantages when his lot is compared with that of those who follow clerical occupations. But the superiority is more fancied than real, and the growing multiplicity of public engagements with which reporters have to deal—even though such engagements may be of a diversified character and necessitate traveling of various kinds—involve an amount of hard, steady work, to say nothing of ability required, which tends to neutralize the fancied superiority.

A description of a couple of days in a reporter's life will best afford an idea of what his work is, and how he performs it. Reporter's work is, speaking generally, similar in character whether on daily or weekly newspapers, with this important difference ;—for an evening paper the work has to be done so that the report may appear in the same evening's issue, and on the morning paper the evening meetings and accounts of all kinds of late events, have to be put out of hand the same night. In the case of the weekly newspaper, there is not the same urgent demand for "copy," though as the staff is numerically small, the reporter will have a greater number of matters

to deal with than his brother on the daily. Let us describe then forty-eight hours in the existence of a reporter, during a "busy time" on the staff of a daily journal.

The reporter, let us suppose, begins his day in the police court, where some case of importance occupies him till mid-day; and, as the evidence is taken in longhand, he will have finished possibly a report of a column or more when the court rises. A philanthropic meeting fills the afternoon, and having done justice in half-a-column to the statements and statistics submitted, the industrious scribe makes his way to the railway station for a journey of twenty miles perhaps, to report a parliamentary candidate who is to address an evening meeting. The last train home carries the reporter back to the newspaper office; and, if it is a slow train, he will have transcribed a good portion of his notes *en route*. Soon after midnight possibly, the reporter, if he is fortunate, will have finished his labors, and, having ascertained what he imagines will be his next engagement, makes his way home. There has been plenty of variety about the day's work, but it may be questioned whether our young friend in the commercial office—time ten to four—would consider that the variety compensated for the remarkably long hours.

But stay! His work is not yet finished. About two in the morning he is aroused from his slumbers by the vigorous ringing of the telephone which connects his house with the office, and he learns that a big fire is raging which demands immediate attention. A scamper through the streets, a hasty collection of facts, three-quarters of an hour of hurried scribbling at the office, and at daybreak, just before the paper goes to press, the reporter again makes his way homeward.

Unfortunately for our contemporary historian, he must be content with a short allowance of sleep. He is under orders to proceed by the first train to a flower-show at the

other end of the county. Midway he breaks his journey to report the deliberations of a Board of Guardians—which youthful aspirants to reportorial honors may be told, in the utmost confidence, is the most uninteresting form of public business which mortal reporter is called on to chronicle. Having listened to two hours of tedious conversation, the Board is “left sitting” by the reporter. In due course he arrives at the scene of the flower-show. Does our reporter leisurely stroll round, with a flower in his button-hole, inspect the beauties of the floral world, and trifle over a light repast in the refreshment tent? Nothing of the sort; the hon. secretary’s tent is his centre of attraction. Installed there, after an amount of manipulation to which the mysteries of book-keeping by double-entry are as child’s play, he makes out a correct list of prize-winners from sundry official documents, which are the result of the united labors of committee and judges. When he has gleaned some details to be used for “introduction,” he finds his way back to the office. He discovers that his arrival is being somewhat anxiously awaited by his chief. A politician of importance has unexpectedly come on the scene. Only a junior hand is available. Will he relieve his less-skilled colleague of the responsible duty of reporting the great man? Of course he will, though his devotion to duty will keep him at work well into the “wee sma’ hours.” Much more might be written, but enough has surely been said to show that the reporter’s life is not wanting in variety.

The work of the reporter, most readers will concede, is arduous as well as varied. Of course the reporter’s “day” is not always so fully occupied, but he needs to be ever on the alert, always well-informed on the public affairs of his own locality, and ready at a moment’s notice to attend the consecration of a Bishop or the execution of a murderer. But if the work is arduous and the duties not

always pleasant, they give the reporter the opportunity—which no other profession affords—of obtaining a wide knowledge of men and of institutions. He goes everywhere, sees everything, and no one should be so well qualified to form a judgment. May the knowledge which journalists acquire prove a better qualification than hitherto for official life, which—if not more responsible—carries greater dignity and ensures more adequate emolument ! As professional men, journalists have a claim to consideration in the distribution of the patronage of the Crown, and a right also to become candidates for various public positions. Let it not still be said that America treats her journalists and men of letters better than the old country !

CHAPTER XVI.

LINERS AND LINEAGE.

The beadle is very careful that two gentlemen not very neat about the cuffs and buttons (for whose accommodation he has provided a special little table . . .) should see all that is to be seen. For they are the public chroniclers of such inquiries, by the line.—*Dickens* ("Bleak House").



QF late years the sphere of operations of the penny-a-liner—on whose exploits many press writers of the old school loved to dwell—has been seriously contracted. With telegraphic news agencies and resident reporters all over the country, the liner has long since perforce confined his operations principally to the metropolis. London daily newspapers still rely on the liner for many items of information, and have, in fact, no staff of reporters available for dealing with metropolitan local news, such as provincial newspapers employ for the collection of the news of their own town and district. Indeed, when we consider the vast extent of London, it is evident that to attempt to do anything of the kind would be practically impossible. London newspapers, in point of fact, concern themselves only with subjects of Imperial and general interest, and the bulk of the daily public life of the metropolis either goes unreported, or is dealt with partially by the district weekly papers. More than one writer on the subject has been struck by the phenomenon, that hitherto London has been without a great local newspaper which should report the proceedings of public bodies in the adequate way familiar to residents in the country who support their own local organs. No capitalist has, up to the present, however, shown any disposition to embark on a rather costly and certainly hazardous enterprise, though

with the greater interest which is being stimulated among Londoners in their own affairs, the starting of some journal of this character seems probable. This is a digression, but the theme is a fruitful one.

Much of the miscellaneous news in the London morning newspapers is lineage work, though all important occurrences are attended to by members of the staff, local correspondents, or the news agencies. For the benefit of the uninitiated, some description may be attempted of the regulations which govern the relations of newspaper conductors with the penny-a-liner. The liner may be described as a journalistic free lance, who is not permanently attached to the staff of any newspaper. He selects for his sphere of labor either some particular district of London, or a special class of work. Perhaps he keeps himself *au courant* with Battersea affairs, for example, and when any sensational or interesting event occurs he can promptly record it. Or, it may be, he makes metropolitan fires his especial province, and, by some arrangement he is able to make, is on the scene of a conflagration as soon as the firemen themselves, and out-distances all competitors in furnishing a prompt description of the incidents attending it.

When the liner has secured the information he requires, he at once sets to work with style and manifold paper and produces a number of copies of his report, carefully writing his name in the top left-hand corner of the first page. At each of the newspaper offices a copy is left without delay. Possibly there are competitors in the field, and when the sub-editor comes to deal with the matter he may have a choice of reports from which to select. Strictly speaking, of course, the sub-editor deals with the news before him on its merits, but generally some particular liner who is better known than his competitors will have the preference. Of course when an account of

some important occurrence reaches the office from one liner only, there is an absolute certainty that it will be used by every paper to which it is sent, much to the joy of the fortunate reporter who has become possessed of this "exclusive" information. Should the subject demand further treatment on succeeding days, he feels tolerably certain that his reports will be used in preference to those of other liners. A piece of luck such as this, in these days of competition, rarely, however, falls to the lot of the industrious scribe.

A good deal could be said both in favor of and against the lineage system. Newspapers, however large their staffs, would be liable to miss many items of news for which they are now indebted to the enterprise of the liner, and obtain moreover at a reasonably cheap rate. The best of the London newspapers pay, it may be remarked in passing, more than the traditional penny per line, and there is usually what is known as a "minimum"—that is to say, if only three or four lines of news are sent or used, the liner is allowed a certain sum for his trouble, instead of the altogether inadequate amount which the item would realize if calculated by the line. Longer items are, of course, charged for on the lineage scale. Payment by results stimulates enterprise, but it also opens the door to some abuses of the lineage system. No liner who is a skilled hand at his business will send prolix reports to a newspaper office. It may be taken as a general rule that there is always more news available than space can be found for, and when an event of no great importance is described at great length, it is very probable that it may be passed over altogether, while a short, terse description would have been readily accepted and paid for. Yet some liners every day commit this fatal error, under the delusion, apparently, that the sub-editor may be found napping and will pass on to the printers a half-column

description of an event which is worth only half-a-dozen lines.

To the credit of the newspaper calling it may be said that no liner will knowingly trade in false news. Those responsible for the contents of newspapers—managers or sub-editors—are chary about giving publicity to communications which come from entire strangers, unless there is an opportunity for verification. Instances have occurred, however, in which men acting as liners have sent absolutely apocryphal news which has been inserted and paid for. But nemesis soon overtakes the man who endeavors to dishonestly follow the liner's useful calling, and retributive justice takes the severe form of a decision that for the future his contributions will under no circumstances be accepted by the journal he has deluded. Liners have a weakness for high-flown or exaggerated language, but this rarely sees the light, for an unsympathetic sub-editor will so condense the account that the public peruse only a bare record of facts. But, to conclude, it may be said that the liner fills, to the advantage of readers, a useful position in the newspaper hierarchy, and that, even with the most complete organization, it would be next to impossible for newspapers to dispense with his contributions.

CHAPTER XVII.

WOMEN AS JOURNALISTS.

There is a great deal of work which can be creditably and profitably done by lady members of the Press. Although we may smile at the attempt of ladies to get into the Reporters' Gallery, there is no doubt that the clause which admits ladies to membership of the Institute is in accordance with the popular ideas of the day.—*Mr Edward Lawson.*



THE recent demand for the admission of a woman reporter to the reporters' gallery of the House of Commons has brought the subject of women as journalists into a prominence which it has not hitherto enjoyed. There is, of course, no novelty in the employment of women in newspaper work. For years past they have been so engaged in America, in London, and in Paris. But it is only—in this country at least—when they claim equal privileges with men in the profession, that their vocation becomes for a time matter of public comment. For example, the controversy about the admission of women to the Institute of Journalists had, in a lesser degree, the result just mentioned. In respect to the more recent request put forward on behalf of women that Press representatives of their own sex should have facilities for Parliamentary reporting, it is highly probable that in an age in which so many politicians have recognized women's suffrage as inevitable, more will yet be heard of their claim.

If there were—as there should be—ample accommodation for all representatives of the Press who desire to be present during the Parliamentary debates, no valid objection could be raised on the score of sex to the admission of women. The severe limitation of space and the mul-

iplicity of demands on it, make it difficult to see how the claim of a new weekly newspaper can be listened to. It is but fair to add, however, that this is not the difficulty on which the Speaker laid stress, namely, "existing practice," when replying to a question on the subject.

That women, having proved that their sex can successfully enter some of the professions—medicine and law, for example, here and in America—now turn their attention to journalism, should not be a matter either of surprise or alarm to the men who now pursue the calling. The medical profession has not been ruined because a few women have entered it. In the paths of authorship and art, to say nothing of tuition, women have so long and honorably taken their place that in these spheres the question has not been debatable.

London requires the services of an army of journalistic writers and compilers of very varied capacities. That women possessed of the requisite literary ability may succeed in some departments in this great field of work is not open to question. No one would say that abler contributions to current political thought could be had than those which the late Miss Martineau wrote for the *Daily News*; and where is better correspondence done than Mrs Emily Crawford now sends to the same newspaper from Paris? In other departments of journalistic work instances might be enumerated of ladies employed at the present time in London in sub-editing and reporting. But, while the ability shown by such women may be admitted to the fullest degree, it does not therefore follow that they will supplant men, or that their sex can look on journalism as an open and desirable field of employment. There are limited and special departments of newspaper work which they alone can successfully undertake.

In support of this assertion let us examine for a moment the various branches of newspaper work as ordinarily

pursued, in order to discover what are the peculiar disadvantages which affect women in regard to them. No newspaper with a moderate-sized reporting staff could afford to attach a woman reporter to the staff, on account of the great drawbacks under which she would work. There are classes of reporting done with propriety by men, which women could not undertake. There are public gatherings reported, at which their presence would not be desired ; and there are inquiries and deliberations at which their presence would not be permitted. Account must also be taken of the discomfort, the irregularity, and at times the unpleasant surroundings, in which the reporter is bound to exercise his calling ; and the extreme pressure under which he often does his work. Would women be prepared, or would their friends desire them, to obtain a livelihood in a calling which must be followed under disadvantages such as these ? Assuredly not ; and no editor would think of engaging a reporter who would be incapacitated from discharging a large portion of the duties he would have to perform. Even in respect to reporting work which women could undertake, it is doubtful if they would have a sufficient grasp of political and municipal questions to write satisfactory reports. Male reporters have therefore very little to fear from the competition of women.

In other branches of general newspaper work the same difficulty presents itself, but in different forms. Women successfully perform secretarial duties for some of our leading journalists, but there is a vast difference between this and the ability to select and condense, which is required of the ordinary sub-editor. Editorial positions are, of course, hardly likely to be filled by women, and editors at least may regard with equanimity the assertion of "women's rights" on the Press.

There is, however, a sphere of journalistic labor for

which women are peculiarly qualified, and have made especially their own. Into this field of work men do not desire to enter, because they have not the knowledge or the qualifications essential to success. Now that the columns of general newspapers are open to contributions of the class styled "Ladies' Letters," women may guide the public opinion of all classes and both sexes, either by ascertaining and giving expression to the views of the leaders of society, or by themselves indicating what is desirable in our social life, as well as what is becoming in the fashions and fancies of the time. The power of women's influence in such directions has been fully recognized by our greatest authors. In relation to what is here urged, the dictum of Sir Walter Scott seems especially appropriate. "In all civilized society," he says, "the females of distinguished rank and beauty give the tone to manners, and, through these, even to morals." Assuredly there is scope in this direction for the efforts of women journalists, without in any degree trenching on the province of the men employed in the same profession. Let them, either in their own newspapers, or in those departments of the general Press which are allotted to women, describe and discuss public concerns as well as the events of social life, and they will find that they have created a position for themselves which they may fill with great and increasing advantage to newspaper readers, without entering on work which they are not, and cannot be, so well qualified to perform as journalists of the sterner sex.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEWSPAPERS AS PARTY ORGANS.

You have intelligence and political training of your own, and my advice to you is to read the news in the papers, to get the information, and then to form your own judgments independently of any conventionally cut-and-dried leading articles.—*Right Hon. John Morley, M.P.*



WHEN Dickens made the partizan zeal of local newspapers a subject for humorous satire in his narrative of Eatanswill journalism in "Pickwick," he hardly exaggerated the methods of political warfare adopted by local buff and blue organs half-a-century ago. And in a measure his satire has not lost its force to-day. Local editors too often take sides with greater zeal than discretion. The buff organ will only allot the most meagre amount of space for accounts of blue meetings, from which it might be supposed that they were of small importance, but for the trenchant criticism they meet with in the editorial columns. This is a very common result of the practice of running in party grooves, which English local journalism is too readily content to adopt. Yet it must be said on its behalf that this state of things has been largely promoted and fostered by politicians themselves. The London newspapers, of course, and some of the large Provincial dailies, report political utterances on both sides with fulness and impartiality, but the country Press does not always follow this good example.

Neither buff nor blue politicians are happy in a constituency till there are two public organs which reflect their respective views. When local newspapers are the creation of one or other side in politics, the less said about the independence of the Press in such instances

the better. The number of journals, however, brought into existence or controlled by party, is not, fortunately, considerable ; nor is there a prospect that there will ever be many newspapers manipulated by party wire-pullers. Those behind the scenes know in how many instances such enterprises have been unsuccessful. The model local newspaper is that which, whether buff or blue in politics, reports every speaker on his merits, and has independence enough not to print a column of twaddle simply because it was uttered by its own political champion. It may then hope to have a wider circle of readers who, as Mr John Morley has said, will consult the paper for information, and form their own judgments, if they are so inclined, independently of the leading articles.

It has often been a subject of discussion, but one singularly barren of tangible conclusions, whether a newspaper writer is morally justified in advocating a political policy with which he does not agree. Such a proposition assumes, of course, that newspaper writers are in the habit of doing this. Let us concede, for the sake of argument, that there are such writers, in order to examine what has been put forward in support of such a practice. The most favorite analogy is that of the barrister or lawyer, who is at the service of the client who retains him. Unfortunately the comparison is a bad one, because the consideration of questions of national policy is surely not to be put on a level with legal services for or against an accused person, which in their proper sphere are highly important. Further it has been suggested that the journalist may be compared to the hired swordsman, who places his skill at the disposal of either party, and is not concerned about the justice or otherwise of the cause for which he fights. The comparison is not a flattering one, and happily it is not, in the main, accurate. Journalists are not found advocating political schemes

which they sincerely believe to be highly inimical to the welfare of the country, any more than divines are found preaching doctrine which they are convinced is heretical. Instances have, indeed, been matter of public comment within the last five years, in which editors have resigned appointments rather than advocate political projects with which they did not agree.

No editor, however, will probably ever succeed in gathering around him a band of journalists who hold precisely his own opinions on political and social questions. But it does not follow that he may not advantageously employ the pens of all of them. For example, a buff editor may have a member of his staff who is conscientiously attached to the blue cause, but who is at the same time an authority, let us say, on agriculture. Now his editor will not desire him to employ his pen in advocating buff policy, but will ask him to devote himself to agricultural topics, and with the happiest results. Editors are not so foolish as to put round men into square holes, and practical journalists know that leader-writers and others are not usually called upon to advocate views with which they are in strong disagreement, or the editor may perchance find either that the article is of little value, or, what is more likely, that it does not express the views he desires to see advocated in the columns of his newspaper. "Honesty is the best policy" in journalistic ethics, as well as in everyday life, and no newspaper could hope to exercise a beneficial influence if its staff were notoriously insincere in what was advocated.

CHAPTER XIX.

ART AND LITERARY CRITICISM.

Give me the critic with a mind well stored,
A judgment balanced, and a heart sincere,
To pick my faults, and set me in the way
When I have miss'd the beautiful, the true ;
Not some coarse blatant, with outpour of words,—
All foul extremes, that reek of prejudice

Nor subtle flatt'rer, with a diction smooth,
Trimming to all, as changed occasion prompts.

—*Meter.*



CRITICISM of art and literature in all their forms has grown with the development of the modern Press, the result being that this branch of journalistic work has now for a long time past been placed in the hands of men specially qualified for dealing with particular departments—as painting, music, the drama, or literature respectively. The scant space devoted to artistic matters of all kinds in the newspapers at the beginning of the century is in striking contrast to the extended notices now given of everything relating to the Muses.

There is an anecdote told of Wilkie to the effect that he and his friends actually danced with glee when one of his pictures was honored with bare mention in the press of the day. British art received, indeed, but scant encouragement or criticism from the newspapers till the late Samuel Carter Hall, through the *Art Journal*, stimulated public interest in art, and it was then discovered that description and criticism of new paintings had an interest for newspaper readers. Dramatic criticism was of a very insignificant description till Hazlitt's masterly work stimulated the desire for something more interesting than a mere narration of the cast. It was some time subsequent

to this, however, before specially qualified critics replaced on the metropolitan journals the ordinary members of the staff who had hitherto, without discrimination almost, done the notices of the theatres. As showing the altered relations between Press and theatre, the tradition prevalent in some newspaper offices may be mentioned, namely, that years ago editors actually paid for the privilege of publishing brief announcements about forthcoming dramatic events. All this is altered in the present day, and dramatic folks are, if anything, too ready to impart information to the Press. Literature has always been closely allied to journalism, indeed the *raison d'être* of several existing papers was to afford a medium for making known to the world the literary wares of some well-known publishers. It is not surprising therefore to find that so early as 1825 Mr Murdo Young commenced in the *Sun* evening newspaper the practice of noticing periodical literature at the beginning of the month, which is now an invariable custom with almost all journals.

Few newspaper readers are aware of the trouble and, in some instances, anxiety involved in the discharge of the functions of critic for the daily or weekly press. A new picture is exhibited, a new play performed, or a new musician courts public favor. The critic is called upon to sit in judgment, and he brings to the discharge of the task a lengthened experience of similar work and an amount of technical knowledge more varied, though not, of course, so thorough or practical as that possessed by artist, actor, or musician. The critic will give the public his honest impressions of what he saw or heard, and his brother critics will do the same, yet if the work criticised has the elements of originality or novelty, it is highly probable that their criticisms will be extremely divergent. No more common example of this can be met with than in dramatic criticism. The critics of the Press who sit in

judgment on the same play will each in his own place give his opinion. Some will praise, others condemn, the author's work ; some will admire, others disparage, the actors' efforts ; but Mrs Kendal has surely somewhat overdrawn the delinquencies of dramatic critics in her address at the Social Science Congress in 1884. "I do not think," she then said, "that the Press of the present day does all that it might do for the true welfare of the drama. Existing critics generally rush into extremes, and either overpraise or too cruelly condemn. The public, as a matter of course, turn to the newspapers for information, but how can any judgment be formed when either indiscriminate praise or unqualified abuse is given to almost every new piece and to the actors who interpret it."

The "falsehood of extremes" is then, according to Mrs Kendal, the besetting sin of the critic. Though the fault is not, surely, so general as the lady's words would indicate, there is, without doubt, room for improvement in the critical notices of the drama. It may, too, be urged that the critic can do his duty and express his honest convictions without giving pain to those he criticises. While it is true that all public performers are open to the fullest and freest criticism, it does not follow that such criticism need be, or, indeed, should be, expressed in a manner which would be considered offensive if delivered *viva voce*. It would be well if critics always observed the valuable rule of giving the reasons for their praise or blame. No critic can, in fact, ever hope to successfully guide public opinion who fails to do this, and, however diverse may be the criticisms which appear in various newspapers, if this course is adopted, the public may at least form a proper estimate of the value to be attached to the expressions of opinion of the critic.

What has just been said applies mainly to musical and theatrical notices. Art and literary criticism call for the

exercise of different and to a large extent more subtle powers of perception. No critic of repute would undertake to criticise a picture offhand. He knows that it is only by diligent study of the motives and methods of the painter that he can hope to give to the public a notice which will prove of any value in guiding their inspection of the work. Further, he should himself possess some technical knowledge. As Mr Sala observed in a recent law suit, "an art critic would be better for a practical knowledge of drawing." In large galleries of pictures the critic is called upon to exercise a most delicate function, and wide experience alone will enable him to perform it satisfactorily. He has to single out special works for notice, and as the public will to some extent accept his guidance in visiting the exhibition for themselves, the critic needs to make his choice with great wisdom and justice. Literary reviewing is not, in these days, done so well as it might be, when newspapers hasten to notice a new work within twenty-four hours of its publication. In this, as in most departments of newspaper criticism, there is too much haste, and there is considerable force in the suggestion that notices and criticisms should be distinct. The public might be furnished next morning with a notice of a new play or a new singer, while criticism might be deferred, and be the fruit of greater thought and study on the part of the critic.

CHAPTER XX.

THE PRESS OF GREATER BRITAIN.

Here shall the Press the people's right maintain,
Unawed by influence and unbribed by gain.

—*Joseph Story.*



MENTION was made in our opening chapter of the first newspaper regularly printed in England, namely, the *Certaine News of the Present Week*, established by Nathaniel Butter, in 1622. We have seen how remarkable has been the growth and development of the Press in the British Isles in the succeeding two centuries and a half, and we may now very fitly, by way of conclusion, observe how enormous has been the growth and spread of the Press among the English-speaking races all over the world. Such statistics as we have to offer concerning the Press of Greater Britain appear well-nigh incredible, and when we reflect what a daily and weekly circulation of printed matter in the English language they indicate, we obtain an overwhelming idea of the power of the Press. Some day possibly our statisticians will take a trustworthy census of the Press of the globe, but till then we must rely on data which can only be regarded as approximately correct. From various sources, then, we gather that the newspapers and periodicals printed in English outside our own country number between fifteen and sixteen thousand. The United States, of course, leads the way, its total number of newspapers, etc., being about 14,000. Canadian journals number 700; Australasian newspapers another 700; the English Press of India, 140; and the South African journals considerably over 50. If any are sceptical of the power of the Press, let them ponder well these figures,

and consider whether they can estimate the influence which day by day and week by week the editors of these journals exercise.

Between the English Colonial Press and the United States Press there are great and distinctive differences. Speaking generally, the Press of our Colonies is conducted far more on the lines of English than American journalism. Canada, doubtless from its proximity to the United States, has seen its Press more ready to adopt some of the characteristic features of Transatlantic journalism than the Colonial Press situated farther from the American Continent has been disposed to do. Canadian newspapers have now for years past adopted the practice of ample headlines as used by American journalists, which give, or should give at a glance, a summary of the news printed below. But not to the same extent, or in the sensational style of America, is the practice followed. Interviewing is pursued within exceedingly modest limits ; of personal journalism in its least satisfactory phases there is very little. A robust moral and religious tone pervades the Press of the Dominion.

Australasian journalism is characterized by solidity, copiousness, and an intelligent and honorable tone which Englishmen of distinction who have visited Australia and New Zealand have thought deserving of praiseworthy comment. The Australians are great newspaper readers, and prefer to have their own public affairs fully and well reported, rather than to have the brief, highly-spiced style of American journalism. A comparison of newspapers with populations shows that our Australian cousins are greater supporters of newspapers than people at home. The leading Australian journals are, too, much larger than English newspapers of similar standing. It is no uncommon thing for the great Melbourne or Sydney journals to contain an amount of matter which is only on rare occa-

sions equalled by English or American dailies. This size is partly accounted for by the great importance attached to local news and the extraordinary diligence shown in its collection ; while the support of the advertisers, as in this country, tends materially in the same direction. With their increasing wealth, and improved telegraphic means of communication, Australian newspapers are beginning to devote more attention to the news of the world. English journals published in India are concerned very largely, indeed almost entirely, with the affairs of the Indian Empire, and though their circulation in India is limited, they are very largely read at home. At the Cape, the daily Press reports public affairs very much in the fashion of English newspapers, and contains able and discriminating articles on Imperial events, of which it is informed by cable messages from London. Scattered all over the world, wherever a handful of Englishmen is to be found, are local newspapers in the English language. They are small, but their influence is not to be underrated, and when they print English news or comments in parallel columns in two and sometimes three languages, who can estimate how great their influence on foreign opinion ?

Of the American Press we hear so much from friendly or candid critics, that it is unnecessary to enter at large on this great topic. For the American newspapers undoubtedly differ greatly from the journals of England and the Colonies, and indeed of the world. Nearly all that distinguishes the Press of the United States from that of other countries may be reasonably assigned to one cause, and that cause the perfect freedom from restraint which it has always enjoyed. The American Press has never had to struggle for freedom ; it was free-born. Some of its excellencies, and certainly many of its defects, are traceable to this freedom from restraint or responsibility. Criticized in the light of English methods and English work, much

of American journalism strikes us as of inferior quality. Let the newspaper reader make his own comparisons by noting the leading articles in first-class London and New York papers respectively. If he is interested in any great American *cause célèbre* he is hardly likely to find his craving for information satisfied by the reports he finds in the newspapers of the country. But in saying this the fact must not be overlooked that we owe the interview and illustrations to American journalism. In the collection of many kinds of news also English editors have unquestionably followed American example.

The hope may be expressed that, as time goes on, the journalists of the great English-speaking race, in whatever part of the world their lot is cast, will more and more be found following the best examples of enterprise from whatever quarter they come, while initiating, at the same time, improvements of their own. It is only by doing this that they can hope to show what the public expects of them—the capacity to guide aright the mighty tendencies of modern civilization.

NOTES.

THE INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISTS (INCORPORATED).

(Chap. vi. p. 33.)

The text of the Royal Charter is printed *in extenso* in the "Grey Book" of the Institute, but the annexed brief summary—which has met with official approval—will furnish an idea of the functions of the Institute :

The Charter gives power to test, by examination, the qualifications of candidates. The Institute is empowered to ascertain the law and practice relating to the profession, and to exercise supervision over members. The Institute may publish information of service or interest to the profession, and it has power to watch any legislation affecting the discharge, by journalists, of their professional duties, as well as to endeavor to effect amendments in the law. It may form a library, establish or give encouragement to a professional journal, and promote or assist any scheme for providing against the exigencies of age, sickness, death, or misfortune. The Institute may acquire a hall or other permanent place of meeting, and grant degrees enumerated F.J.I., M.J.I. It is commissioned to secure the advancement of journalism, to obtain for journalists formal and definite professional standing, and to promote by all reasonable means the interests of the profession. Members are, however, restricted from carrying on any trade. The Charter creates the Institute "for ever hereafter, one body politic and corporate," with a perpetual succession and a common seal, and power to hold real property. In the final clause occur these memorable words:—"And We do hereby for Us, Our Heirs and their Successors, grant and declare that these Our Letters Patent shall be in all things good, firm, valid, and effectual in the law, according to the true intent and meaning of the same, and shall be taken, construed, and adjudged in all our Courts or elsewhere, in the most favorable and beneficial sense, and for the best advantage of the said Institute of Journalists."

REPORTERS AND SHORTHAND.

(Chap. xiv. p. 73.)

The following statistics are submitted in proof of the assertion that Pitman's Shorthand is practically in universal use in newspaper offices :

The figures quoted below relate to the staffs of 16 London daily newspapers—10 morning and 6 evening journals—and 3 Metropolitan news agencies ; also 38 of the principal daily papers in England and Scotland. The systems used by 607 journalists attached to the staffs of these newspapers are as under :—

	Pitman.	Taylor.	Gurney.	Peachey.	Janes.	Bell.	Lewis.	Bradley.	Harding.	Brown.
London Newspapers ...	115	8	3	1	2	1	2	1	...	1
Provincial Newspapers	405	4	3	2	1	1	...	...	...	...
London Press Agencies	49	6	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	569	18	7	3	3	2	2	1	1	1

—" *Printers' Register*," Feb., 1890.

Of the various shorthand systems among 94 "Gallerymen," 60 write Pitman's system, 12 Taylor's, 7 Gurney's, 3 Lewis's, 1 Lowe's, 1 Byrom's, 1 Peachey's, 1 Everett's, 1 Bell's, 1 Mavor's, and 1 Janes's.—*Mr W. Maxwell on "Parliamentary Reporting"* in "*Time*," May, 1889.



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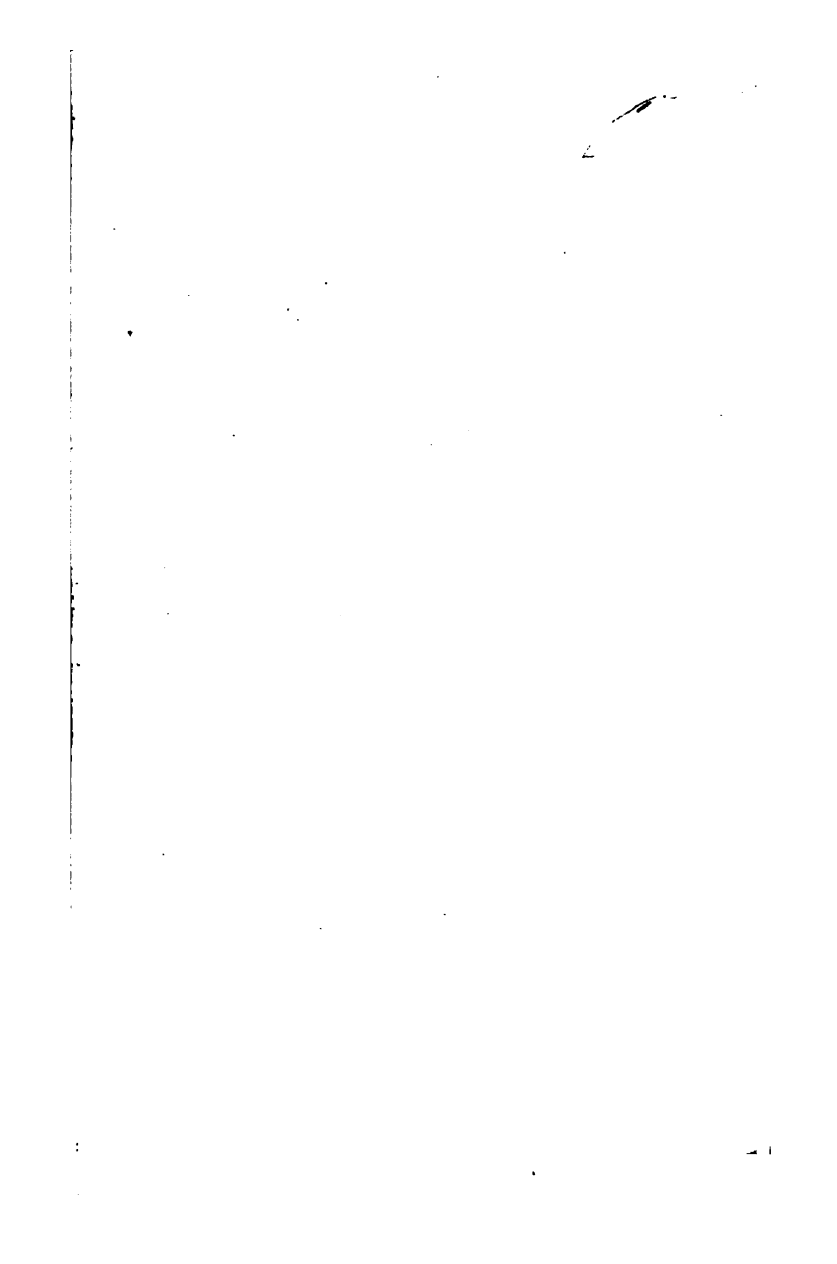
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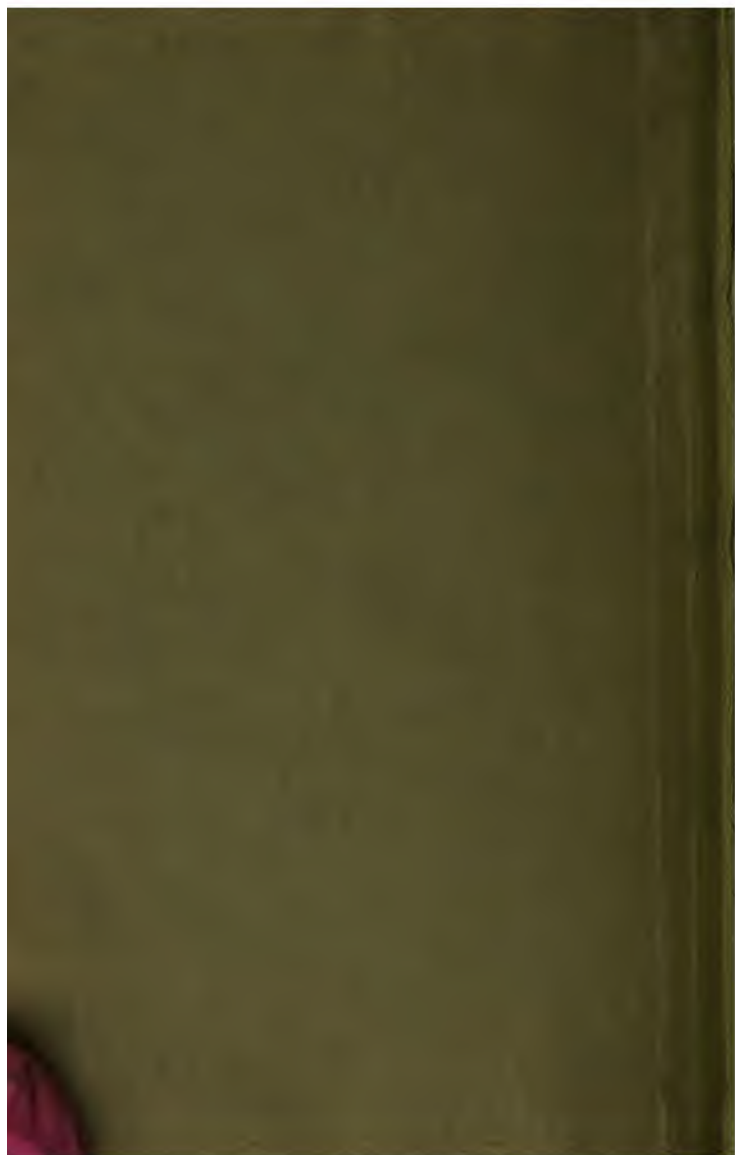
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